

Gatsby Notes (In-Depth Reading Guide)

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NOTE: This set of notes is intended to be used as a companion guide referred to while reading the book, as a mostly-linear close reading of the book and its contents. (see King Lear/Owen IOC notes for a similar format) All interpretations within are either personal interpretations of the novel or derived from online sources, Mr Loh Guan Liang, or Mr Brian Connor, and as such may have some degree of deviation from another's interpretation. This is not necessarily a bad thing, as this is a very complex novel open to interpretation.

Updated econs examples with trade and development definitions

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zpMTIJ8Qslsp-1SpdopchFbXZPP1PMII_9YfLIYmeRY/edit?usp=sharing

Opening Quote (very apt summary of one of the facets of the plot in the novel, including this here as it can be very important to one's understanding of the novel)

'Then wear the gold hat, if that will move her;

If you can bounce high, bounce for her too,

Till she cry 'Lover, gold-hatted, high-bouncing lover,

I must have you!'

- Thomas Parke d'Invilliers

Throughout the novel, Gatsby displays his immense wealth, and had worked his way up from a young 'clam digger and a salmon fisher'. He wears the 'gold hat', living ostentatiously in an example of conspicuous consumption, bouncing higher and higher in society seeking to gain her attention with his lavish parties. He eventually wins her heart for a time, but it all ends tragically in his death.

Chapter 1 (Introduction)

- Nick recalls his experience in Long Island, it is revealed that the story is a framed narrative
 - Nick recalls going to the Buchanans' house, meeting Jordan Baker, finds about Tom's infidelity and cracks in the Buchanan marriage, sees Gatsby gazing over the bay
- Narrative>Buchanans>Gatsby
- We are introduced to Nick in this chapter
 - It is revealed that the story is a framed narrative, as Nick recalls the events of Gatsby from 'last autumn'

- This is significant, as Nick sometimes provides the reader with different, contradictory views from time to time
 - Sometimes this is due to the difference between his words at the time and his beliefs at the time of writing
 - e.g. 'You're worth the whole damn bunch put together' at the pool in C8, and stating that he 'represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn' in C1
 - However, Nick begins instead with a rather longwinded opening speech
- Nick
 - Long-winded, full of exposition and poetic words unlike Meursault
 - Intelligent, introspective, insightful
 - However, it is hinted that he is not entirely honest, as 'frequently I have feigned sleep... when I realised by some unmistakable sign that an intimate revelation was quivering on the horizon'
 - 'Reserving judgements is a matter of infinite hope'
 - Nick gives people the benefit of the doubt, not condemning them for their behaviour
 - Remembering that 'all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had'
 - This makes him Uncle Agony, as he was 'privy to the secret griefs of wild, unknown men' in college
 - Fitzgerald foreshadows Nick's role in the story, as a narrator who finds himself privy to the secrets of others as others trust him near them
 - Nick ingratiates himself with various characters, allowing us to see the circumstances they find themselves in as well as their backstories
 - The reader is thus privy by proxy to the secrets and experiences of the characters in the novel through Nick's framed narrative and disclosure of events
 - Note, however, that it may be implied that Nick is not entirely reliable, especially since there are gaps in backstory, e.g. 5-year gap in Gatsby's (1912-1917)
 - 'When I came back from the East last autumn'
 - It is revealed that Nick is currently back in the Midwest, and the events of the story (~1922) took place the previous summer/autumn
 - 'At a sort of moral attention forever', 'I wanted no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart'
 - Something horrible happened that changed his perspective, Nick wanted no more of such secrets, and wanted more adherence to a strict moral code
 - Foreshadows the spiralling descent into the book's tragic resolution
 - 'Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt from my reaction – Gatsby, who represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn'
 - The story is more than just a framed narrative; it is a book that Nick writes
 - 'The Great Gatsby' is thus more than just the title, it is the view Nick has on Gatsby
 - Due to his willingness and courage to dream, to defy social norms and the 'indiscernible barbed wire' and fight towards that dream

- Yet, Nick has an 'unaffected scorn' for the things Gatsby represents, despite his exemption from Nick's angry, bitter reaction at the events of the novel
 - He hates what he stands for, but almost admires the man possibly due to the reasons stated above
 - 'romantic readiness'
 - Interesting phrase used here that will be revisited later in C8
 - Romantic, in the normal sense of popular romance, where he, the romantic man chasing the woman of his dreams, is ready to be in love
 - But also another sense of romantic, of the world of the romantic poets
 - They write about the mystery of the world, of creation, the sense of independence and strong individuality
 - Fitzgerald almost suggests both within the novel
 - 'Gatsby turned out all right in the end'
 - Interesting in how he says this after he states that he had an 'unaffected scorn' for the things he represents
 - Perhaps foreshadowing an important event that changes Nick's perceptions of secrets, human interactions, and Gatsby himself
 - Mysteriousness created in how Nick seems to condemn what he represents, but then claim that the man was 'all right'
 - 'it is what preyed on Gatsby'
 - Odd choice of diction normally used for animals, implies Gatsby has become the victim, foreshadows tragedy of his death
 - In fact, it was not Gatsby, but what 'preyed' on him that made Nick temporarily jaded
 - Fitzgerald creates a sense of curiosity as to what that is in the reader, whether it be the cruel, unfeeling world, the carelessness of rich men and women, or the unstoppable passage of time and the futility of his dream (depending on your interpretation of the text and this statement)
 - As for us, we find out what happens later in the novel
- Nick's history
 - 'Prominent well-to-do people in this Middle Western city for three generations'
 - 'participated in that delayed Teutonic migration known as the Great War'
 - Nick fought in WWI, enjoyed it even, came back 'restless'
 - Decided to go East to make his fortune, enter 'the bond business' 'in the spring of twenty-two'
 - Arrives at New York, a financial centre known for big money, in spring 1922
 - Rents a house on Long Island, West Egg, next to Gatsby 'for eighty dollars a month'
 - 'at the very tip of the egg', 'squeezed between two huge places that rented for twelve or fifteen thousand a season'
 - Gatsby's mansion
 - 'a colossal affair by any standard', 'a factual imitation of some Hotel de Ville in Normandy, with a tower on one side, spanking new under a thin beard of raw ivy, and a marble

swimming pool, and more than forty acres of lawn and garden'

- 'white palaces of fashionable East Egg glittered along the water'
- East Egg & West Egg
 - Based on Great Neck peninsula
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/01/nyregion/01gatsby.html>
 - East Egg on Sands Point
 - West Egg on Kings Point

East Egg	West Egg	Valley of Ashes
Old Money More classy More fashionable Authentic 'white palaces'	Nouveau riche Vulgar Less fashionable Factual Imitation Superficial 'mansions'	Working class Labourers Gloomy, run-down Ash abundant

- People in West Egg trying to be fashionable, classy
- Tom Buchanan
 - Fantastic college football player, 'a national figure in a way'
 - Enormously wealthy family, hailed from Chicago
 - 'brought down a string of polo ponies from Lake Forest'
 - 'drifted here and there unrestfully wherever people played polo and were rich together'
 - 'I felt that Tom would drift on forever seeking, a little wistfully, for the dramatic turbulence of some irrecoverable football game'
 - When one considers Tom's infidelity, wandering around, this statement makes sense, explains his inability to stick to one woman for long
 - Also highlights Nick's perceptiveness
 - Brash, decisive
 - 'remarked decisively', 'I'd be a God damned fool to live anyone else'
 - Physical description
 - 'sturdy straw-haired man of thirty'
 - 'supercilious manner'
 - 'a body capable of enormous leverage – a cruel body'
 - 'a gruff husky tenor'
 - 'a brute of a man, a great, big, hulking physical specimen of a –' according to Daisy
- Buchanan mansion
 - 'a sunken Italian garden, a half acre of deep pungent roses, and a snub-nosed motor-boat that bumped the tide offshore'
 - 'It belonged to Demaine, the oil man'
 - Wait, what is this? The Buchanans live in a house that possibly used to belong to a wealthy entrepreneur, one that actually had to earn his wealth?
 - This calls into question the assumptions made earlier about the Eggs, possible that that old rich care not about whether they enjoy the houses the new rich used to live in
 - As this very house is likely one of those very 'factual imitations'

- Is wealth necessarily more authentic when in the hands of the old rich? Or is the assumption made about the vulgarity of the new rich, of the 'indiscernible barbed wire' by various characters (e.g. Daisy, old rich in Gatsby's party) in the novel untrue?
- 'two young women were buoyed up as though upon an anchored balloon'
 - 'anchored balloons' symbolise lack of freedom, but in a lighthearted manner, hints at gender roles within the novel
 - Female emancipation occurs, but women expected to cook and clean, be subservient, dependent on husbands (e.g. Daisy despite Tom's infidelity)
 - Echoed later in C7, 'silver idols', in a heavier tone
 - Revealed to be Daisy and Jordan
- Daisy
 - Nick's cousin
 - 'and held my hand for a moment, looking up into my face, promising that there was no one in the world she so much wanted to see. That was a way she had.'
 - Charming woman, capable of endearing herself to others
 - 'the last sunshine fell with romantic affection upon her glowing face'
 - 'low thrilling voice', revisited later in Gatsby's description of 'her voice is full of money'
 - 'difficult to forget' for men who cared for her
 - Has a three-year-old child with Tom
- Jordan Baker
 - Revealed that Nick is infatuated with her, foreshadows relationship
 - Contrast the descriptions Nick gives of Daisy and Jordan in this chapter, Daisy is described in terms of her voice and charm, while Jordan is described in terms of her physical features
 - 'I enjoyed looking at her', 'a slender, small-breasted girl, with an erect carriage'
 - Later, her dishonesty is foreshadowed as Nick recalls that he has heard a 'critical, unpleasant story' that he had forgotten
- 'the telephone rang inside'
 - Jordan reveals that 'Tom's got some woman in New York'
 - Daisy goes to get Tom back to the table, and Myrtle phones again
 - With an unwanted 'fifth guest's shrill metallic urgency'
 - This has a significant impact on Daisy, and Nick himself
 - Tone changes from the poetic, upbeat tone of earlier in 'sunshine fell with romantic affection' to a more gloomy tone, 'deep gloom'
 - 'I saw that turbulent emotions possessed her'
 - Nick's perceptiveness is shown once again, as he sees Daisy's grief and attempts to distract her by asking about her child
 - 'Well I've had a very bad time, Nick, and I'm pretty cynical about everything'
 - Tom's infidelity clearly gives her grief, maybe some remnant of love for Tom perhaps still remains, but regardless she is hurt about it
 - Her hurt here foreshadows her refusal to deny that she ever did love Tom in the novel's climax in C7 in the Plaza Hotel
 - 'And I hope she'll be a fool – that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool'

- Daisy is not a fool herself, but part of a social environment that does not value intelligence in women, she accepts this and conforms to the social standard of American femininity in the 1920s
 - Tom's remark that Jordan's family 'oughtn't to let her run around the country this way' further reinforces this impression of 'anchored balloons that are the women of the 1920s'
- When Nick returns home, he sees Gatsby staring at 'a single green light' 'that might have been the end of a dock'
 - Nick intends to call out to him, but has the impression that Gatsby is content to be alone, and believes that Gatsby is trembling
 - Perceptive nature seen once again, Fitzgerald uses this to his advantage by hinting at the subtle character traits that make up the enigmatic Gatsby
 - Gatsby then vanishes, further reinforcing the impression of his enigmatic nature
 - Fitzgerald's purpose in this:
 - Popular novelist novel
 - One of the features of this are enigmatic, mysterious characters, they have a romantic aura about them
 - Creates a man of mystery that intrigues
 - Literary level
 - Represents level of complexity of human beings, Fitzgerald shows how they are unfathomable, do escape judgement sometimes and are elusive
 - E.g. we don't know what Daisy thinks sometimes

Chapter 2 (Valley of Ashes and Party)

- Nick goes with Tom to the Valley of Ashes, then with Tom and Myrtle to a party in New York
- Valley of Ashes>Wilson Garage>Train to New York>Morningside Heights Apartment>Impromptu Party with Catherine, McKees>Tom breaks Myrtle's nose>Train back
- Characters
 - Nick
 - Tom
 - Myrtle
 - Wilson
 - Catherine
 - McKees
- Valley of Ashes
 - Half-way between West Egg and New York, alongside road and railroad
 - 'valley of ashes – a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens'
 - New York's ashes are dumped here, men shovel them up
 - Home to some of the only poor characters in the novel, an area implying the high income inequality of the 1920s, by-products of the American Dream
 - These show the inability to ascend to wealth, despite how hard they might work, and hence the lie of the American Dream
 - George Wilson, for example, works hard, looks for the big break by pinning his hopes on the very man having an affair with his wife as he 'could make some money' on Tom's car to move West
 - To prevent his wife cheating on him even further
 - Hence, a hard worker fails to achieve success, hints at the failure of the American Dream
 - Eyes of Doctor T.J. Eckleburg
 - Eyes have an undefined significance, simply 'brood on over the solemn dumping ground'
 - Possible interpretation
 - God's eyes presiding over the moral degradation present in the 1920s, with the faded paint symbolising the extent to which man has lost its connection with God
 - Supported by 'God sees everything' from Wilson in C8
 - Wilson's Garage
 - 'unprosperous and bare', only one 'dust-covered wreck of a Ford' inside
 - Wilson pines for his big break, but is poor, unable to find fortune
 - Has a 'damp gleam of hope' in his eyes when Tom and Nick walk in, implies despondence at his poverty
- George Wilson
 - 'a blond, spiritless man, anaemic, and faintly handsome'
 - Tom is initially friendly with him, 'slapping him jovially on the shoulder', but his demeanor turns cold at the slightest hint of talking back to him
 - Also calls him 'so dumb he doesn't know he's alive'
 - Highlights Wilson's lifelessness, causes readers to have even more sympathy for this tragic character (even more at end of novel)
 - This behaviour, when considering that Tom has an affair with Wilson's wife, shows Tom's arrogance and demeanor of superiority over others

- Myrtle Wilson
 - 'thickish figure', 'carried her flesh sensuously as some woman can'
 - Face 'contained no facet or gleam of beauty', but there was an immediately 'perceptible vitality'
 - Contrast this with the pale, lifeless Wilson and the ash-covered workers, it is likely that Myrtle could be pretending to be something she is not, deriving status and identity from her state as the mistress of a rich man
 - 'walking through her husband as if he was a ghost', 'spoke to her husband in a soft, coarse voice'
 - Shows how she looks down on her husband, wears the pants in the relationship, contrasting with traditional gender roles implied in C1
 - Myrtle is thus characterised as ambitious, achieving the American Dream through unscrupulous means other than hard work
 - Dominant, unlike the submissive traditional female
 - Subversion of gender roles hints at the theme of female emancipation within the novel, but twists the conventional good impression of this, highlighting the moral degradation implied
 - Sits away from Tom and Nick in the train, shows how Tom does defer to the 'sensibilities of those East Eggers who might be on the train'
 - Tom buys her a dog rather dismissively, shows his supercilious attitude, hints at her materialism displayed again later in chapter
 - 'I'm going to make a list of all the things I've got to get'
 - Stark display of materialism, consumerist attitude in the 1920s shown here
 - Fitzgerald thus provides us with effective social commentary via his portrayal of Myrtle via the narrator Nick
 - Apartment
 - 'a small living-room, a small dining-room, a small bedroom, and a bath'
 - Impromptu Party
 - Nick gets drunk that afternoon, certain degree of unreliability in that narrative
 - Catherine arrives
 - Myrtle's sister, slender and red-haired
 - Mr McKee arrives, 'a pale feminine man from the flat below'
 - Mrs McKee arrives, 'shrill, languid, handsome, and horrible'
 - Myrtle's behaviour changes
 - After she changes into 'an elaborate afternoon dress of cream-coloured chiffon'
 - 'The intense vitality that had been so remarkable in the garage was converted into impressive hauteur'
 - Attitude changes the moment she slips on a new dress, shows how she derives status and her identity from her possessions
 - Incredibly materialistic woman
 - Cried over the fact that her husband borrowed someone else's suit to get married in
 - Catherine provides Nick with insight
 - Nick ingratiates himself with her, is then rewarded with further insight
 - On the claim that 'Neither of them can stand the person they're married to'

- Materialism, and getting married to people above their station
 - Seen in Mrs McKee and Myrtle
 - Mrs McKee says she 'almost made a mistake too', of marrying a man who 'was below' her
 - Myrtle 'married him because I thought he was a gentleman'
- Nick 'wanted to get out and walk eastward toward the park through the soft twilight'
 - Is 'within and without, simultaneously enchanted and repelled by the inexhaustible variety of life'
 - Striking, as we notice that this quote describes Nick's demeanor throughout the novel
 - Nick is in the groups, but does not necessarily agree with their views, his moral compass as a Midwesterner is different from that of those in the East
- Tom 'broke her nose with his open hand' after arguing 'whether Mrs Wilson had any right to mention Daisy's name'
 - Brings party to an abrupt halt
 - Tom's brutality, coarseness, etc. shown here, seems to contradict the idea that those who were born into riches are cultured
- Moral degradation
 - New York loud, garish, abundant, glittering
 - Fascinating and repulsive to Nick, lacks a moral centre
 - Tom forced to keep affair secret in Long Island, not so here as he can parade Myrtle around in public
 - Even Nick, despite Daisy's cousin, seems not to mind that Tom does so
 - Nick's attempt not to be judgemental can be seen clearly here
 - We also do see some compromise here, as Nick gets drunk, partakes in gossip, and witnesses incredible brutality and infidelity in this chapter
 - Fitzgerald thus effectively portrays the moral degradation of the 1920s through this episode through the eyes of Nick
 - Nick is 'within and without, simultaneously enchanted and repelled by the inexhaustible variety of life'
 - Striking, as we notice that this quote describes Nick's demeanor throughout the novel
 - Nick is in the groups, but does not necessarily agree with their views, his moral compass as a Midwesterner is different from that of those in the East

Chapter 3 (Gatsby's Party I)

- Nick describes the scene of Gatsby's parties, his experience at one of them, conversation with Jordan and Lucille, Owl-eyed man in the library with books, Gatsby himself, the scene of the wives being unwilling to leave at the end, before a summary of events in downtime
- Gatsby's parties>Attendance at party>Jordan and Lucille>Owl-eyed man>Gatsby>Gossip>Scene at end of party>Accident>Summary of events>Jordan and Nick
- Characters
 - Nick
 - Gatsby
 - Jordan
 - Lucille
 - Owl-eyed man
- Nick
 - Once again, in this passage we see that Nick's familiar character traits discussed earlier come out again
 - Nick is both in and out of the party, and doesn't have much fun, not like other guests at the almost 'amusement park'
 - Ironically, he doesn't feel like he belongs despite being one of the few invited to the party
 - He provides a subjective, sometimes emotional perspective, giving his own spin on the events that took place
 - May have coloured the story to some degree, bias and unreliability may be present but only to a limited extent if so
- 'machine in the kitchen which could extract the juice of two hundred oranges in half an hour if a little button is pressed two hundred times by a butler's thumb'
 - Here we see a glimpse of the context of the novel, of 1920s America
 - The consumption culture can be seen here, as well as the increased prevalence of machines to do work for the rich
 - When coupled with servants such as the aforementioned butler, this explains why the rich in the novel live such an idyllic, carefree lifestyle
- Party
 - 'once a fortnight'
 - 'a corps of caterers'
 - 'several hundred feet of canvas and enough coloured lights to make a Christmas tree of Gatsby's enormous garden'
 - Buffet tables
 - 'glistening hors-d'oeuvre, spiced baked hams crowded against salads of harlequin designs and pastry pigs and turkeys bewitched to a dark gold'
 - Bar
 - 'In the main hall a bar with a real brass rail was set up'
 - 'stocked with gins and liquors and with cordials so long forgotten that most of his female guests were too young to know one from another'
 - Orchestra!!
 - 'no thin five-piece affair, but a whole pitful of oboes and saxophones and viols and cornets and piccolos, and low and high drums'
 - Note the use of syndetic listing, can be interpreted as creating a sense of breathlessness
 - Is Nick taken aback by the grandeur of it all?

- The immense grandeur of the party can be seen above, as Gatsby shows off his great wealth. In truth, this is exactly that, a show of his wealth, like a peacock ruffling its feathers for the woman he seeks to obtain.
- Amusement park
 - 'The lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun'
 - 'Laughter is easier minute by minute, spilled with prodigality'
 - 'already there are wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there'
 - Female emancipation at work, as one of the girls Nick likens to 'gypsies' 'seizes a cocktail out of the air, dumps it down for courage and moving her hands like Frisco, dances out alone on the canvas platform'
 - 'People were not invited – they went there'
 - Nick is invited, but many are not, they just show up
 - 'they conducted themselves according to the rules of behaviour associated with an amusement park'
 - Childish, wild guests
 - 'simplicity of heart'
 - Guests came merely to have fun
 - Context, soldiers came back from the war and wanted to live a little
- Note the capitalist undertones with the 'young Englishmen' 'talking in low, earnest voices to solid and prosperous Americans'
 - 'agonising aware of the easy money in the vicinity'
 - Yes, the American Dream is implied to be very much at work here, but sinister undertones are present as swindlers may be at work as well
 - When one considers Gatsby's unscrupulous sale of alcohol during Prohibition alongside this, the corrupted American Dream may not be limited to Gatsby and Meyer Wolfsheim in this novel after all
- Lucille
 - Nick meets Jordan and her acquaintances, one of which is Lucille
 - We find out that Gatsby had replaced an evening gown she tore at a previous party for free
 - This sets off a string of gossip about Gatsby
 - This gossip is masterfully used by Fitzgerald to enhance the sense of mysteriousness about the enigmatic titular character
 - As they first speculate that he was a German spy, an American soldier that had killed a man, etc.
- East Egg and West Egg
 - Residents of West Egg, New York, the less uptight in general have a roaring good time at the party
 - But Jordan's 'own party, who were spread around a table on the other side of the garden' are different
 - 'this party had preserved a dignified homogeneity, and assumed to itself the function of representing the staid nobility of the countryside – East Egg condescending to West Egg and carefully on guard against its spectroscopic gaiety'
- Owl-Eyed Man
 - In search of Gatsby, Nick and Jordan bump into Owl-eyed man in the library
 - Said man is unusually fixated by the books in the library, not on their contents and literary value like a good IB literature student would

- But rather on the authenticity of the books and the fact that the pages were not cut
- Owl-eyed man assumes that Gatsby did not purchase the books out of a hunger for knowledge, but rather as a way of showing off, of implying that he is a cultured, well-read and wealthy man
 - He is right, as we see that Gatsby 'didn't cut the pages'
 - Back then, books were arranged in folios, large pieces of paper folded and sewn into a binding
 - One needed to cut the far edge of the pages from the margins apart so they were separated
- Calls Gatsby 'a regular Belasco'
 - David Belasco was an American playwright
 - Known for creating very elaborate stage sets
 - Compared him to Gatsby, this implies that the library is nothing more than part of an elaborate charade
 - A mere prop, unused apart from the frivolous waste of it to just stay there and look good
- So far, we see a very materialistic world of the 1920s. with everyone concerned with outside appearances and material wealth
 - Myrtle buys and buys, not with her own money at that
 - Gatsby puts up elaborate parties every fortnight, 'had just bought a hydroplane'
 - What does this imply about the American Dream? Is the fixation many of the characters have with getting rich in the novel necessarily a good thing?
- Gatsby
 - 'We were sitting at a table with a man of my age and a rowdy little girl'
 - Nick does not know that this man before him is Gatsby, drawing parallels with the partygoers who do not know who their host is
 - Note how Nick has the common decency to attempt to find him at first, but slowly got side-tracked as the party went along
 - 'old sport'
 - This common utterance is used 41 times in the text (reference.com)
 - Used to address Nick, Tom, etc.
 - Used as a term of endearment and a way to separate himself from other men, as no other character in the novel uses this
 - A catchphrase, of sorts
 - Gatsby adopts this phrase when he brings the 'platonic conception of himself', developing his identity as the wealthy, successful Jay Gatsby
 - Implies manufactured affections, attitudes, and a façade he puts on to appear more cultured, more outstanding than he is
 - Recognises Nick as a fellow member of the First Division during WWI
 - Presumably the 1st Infantry Division (The Big Red One)
 - Nick 'was in the Twenty-eighth Infantry'
 - Gatsby 'in the Sixteenth until June nineteen-eighteen'
 - Note that this changes depending on edition, another says it was the 3rd Division

- Nick is initially taken in by the façade Gatsby puts up, but then realises this
 - ‘Precisely at that point it vanished – and I was looking at an elegant young rough-neck, a year or two over thirty, whose elaborate formality of speech just missed being absurd.
 - Tough young man who could handle himself
 - ‘I’d got a strong impression that he was picking his words with care’
 - Here we see Nick’s observant nature, suggesting that he is generally a good judge of character
 - We also are introduced to another facet of Gatsby, that he may not be the cultured, wealthy, sophisticated playboy he seeks to make others believe he is, making him seem even more enigmatic
 - And the idea that there might be something more sinister beneath the surface
 - Significant, as Fitzgerald weaves yet another layer into the multi-coloured embroidered tapestry that is Jay Gatsby
 - That of a man who might not be all that he seems to be, setting the stage for the eventual revelations of his humble beginnings, unscrupulous ascent to wealth, and fixation with Daisy late in the novel
- After Gatsby leaves, Jordan tells Nick that she doesn’t believe that Gatsby ‘was an Oxford man’
 - Nick is reminded about the other girl’s (not Lucille) ‘I think he killed a man’
 - Stimulates Nick’s curiosity, and the reader’s too, while making Gatsby seem even more enigmatic
 - As Fitzgerald draws a connecting line between these two ideas, making the reader believe that there may be something more to Gatsby than there is on the surface
 - Fitzgerald’s skill in crafting multifaceted characters is seen, as he layers layer upon layer of development onto the enigmatic Gatsby
 - Jordan is then called to see Gatsby, they then have a private conversation
 - Contents of which are revealed in C4
- Nick sees Gatsby ‘standing alone on the marble steps and looking from one group to another with approving eyes’
 - Gatsby, like Nick, is possibly ‘within and without’
 - He ‘was not drinking’, and did not necessarily partake in the dances and games in this ‘amusement park’
- Note how Fitzgerald delays the introduction of Gatsby until the third chapter
 - Along with the aspects of Gatsby’s character and behaviour that is slightly amiss, this serves to heighten the enigmatic nature of the man
 - Throws parties when he knows none of his guests
 - Calls people ‘old sport’
 - Elaborate formal speech
- Female Emancipation
 - ‘She had a fight with a man who says he’s her husband’, ‘Most of the remaining women were now having fights with men said to be their husbands’
 - Women too drunk, having fights with their husbands
 - It was not only the wayward men cheating on their partners that were reluctant to go home, but ‘highly indignant wives’

- That act in childish ways, not wanting to go back home, saying that they were 'always the first ones to leave' even though the 'orchestra left half an hour ago'
 - Here, gender stereotypes are subverted, as sober men and indignant, drunk wives are contrasted (usually the men were drunk back then)
 - The idea of female emancipation, of fighting for equal rights, is questioned
 - What are the women fighting for? To be able to get drunk and make fools of themselves?
 - The idea is almost ridiculed, made into a joke
 - We also see an **unflattering image of women and female emancipation** painted in C1-3, from Myrtle who sleeps with Tom and bosses her husband around with a 'soft, coarse voice', to drunk women and 'highly indignant wives' here
 - Here, Fitzgerald provides us with a bit of social commentary, on the idea of female emancipation in the 1920s
- Car crash
 - A presumably drunk man crashes a car into 'the ditch beside the road', with Owl-eyed man as a passenger
 - First instance of car imagery used in the novel, later also seen in Jordan's (spoilers: initial) view of Nick as a 'careful driver'
 - Jordan's reckless driving later
 - Daisy crashing car into Myrtle
- Nick over the weeks
 - States that the events of the three nights in the three chapters were 'several weeks apart', and 'merely casual events in a crowded summer' that did not occupy his mind until much later
 - Works as a bond-man, has an affair with a 'girl who lived in Jersey City'
 - Began to 'like New York, the racy, adventurous feel of it at night'
 - Fantasises about women, interesting how Meursault does the same despite their great differences in emotional depth
 - However, feels a 'haunting loneliness' in both himself and others
- Nick and Jordan
 - 'For a while I lost sight of Jordan Baker, and then in mid-summer I found her again'
 - 'something more' grew after the initial phase where he was merely 'flattered to go places with her, because she was a golf champion'
 - 'I wasn't actually in love, but I felt a sort of tender curiosity'
 - Dishonesty
 - 'moved her ball from a bad lie in the semi-final round'
 - Suggests that Jordan had cheated at golf
 - 'instinctively avoided clever shrewd men', 'She was incurably dishonest'
 - Nick finds that she was unable to endure being at a disadvantage, and supposes that 'she had begun dealing in subterfuges when she was very young'
 - Jordan's a very reckless driver, 'a rotten driver' according to Nick
 - Suggests that Nick is not one of those 'careless people' she hates
 - Nick seems to agree with this sentiment later in the passage but no in the conversation, 'But I am slow-thinking and full of interior rules that act as brakes on my desires'
 - But later in the novel after they break up her opinion of him changes

- 'I thought I had found a careful driver'
- Nick's unreliability, subjectivity as Jordan's dishonesty excusable in his eyes
 - 'Dishonesty in a woman is a thing you can never blame deeply'
 - Contrast this with 'I am one of the few honest people I have ever known', this marked inconsistency shows his unreliability
 - Nick could be influenced by life in the East, as his previous Midwestern values may have been subverted due to the company he was in
- 'I am one of the few honest people I have ever known'
 - At first glance, this doesn't appear to be entirely true, we see Nick lie to others, withhold the truth, and the like throughout the novel
 - Perhaps this is due to the people he interacts with, maybe he deems himself nothing like the characters who cheat on their wives, cheat at work, and the like
 - Yet, we see Nick act responsibly at others, such as when he is honest with the girl back home, or when he makes it clear to Jordan that their relationship is over
 - This statement, therefore, may show Nick's status as an unreliable narrator

Chapter 4: Gatsby, Wolfsheim and Gatsby & Daisy's Past by Jordan

Rumours by young girls, list of partygoers, encounter with Gatsby, lunch with Meyer Wolfsheim, Jordan on Daisy and Gatsby's pasts

Rumours>Partygoers>Gatsby's account of his past l>Pulled over for speeding>Lunch with Meyer Wolfsheim>Jordan on conversation with Gatsby, Daisy's past

Characters

- Nick
- Gatsby
- Meyer Wolfsheim
- Jordan
- Daisy

Rumours

- 'He's a bootlegger'
- 'One time he killed a man who had found out that he was nephew to Von Hindenburg and second cousin to the devil'
 - Second rumour seems much more far-fetched than the first
 - Although both were from young women in the middle of drinking, there is a hint of truth in the first
 - Gatsby is indeed a bootlegger, running a series of drugstores with Meyer Wolfsheim that sell liquor underneath the counter
 - This is an example of how Fitzgerald foreshadows and hints at what Gatsby has beneath the glistening, polished façade he puts up

Partygoers

- Long list of partygoers who visit Gatsby's house then given
 - Provides the reader with a sense of the scope of Gatsby's parties
 - As this long list is just the people that Nick got to know

Gatsby

- Gatsby calls on Nick to go to lunch with him, they drive towards New York city
- Prior to getting in car
 - Nick notices Gatsby's 'punctilious manner in the shape of restlessness'
 - Showcases Nick's immense attention to detail and perceptiveness
 - Restlessness throughout novel, implies how Gatsby tries to climb to the top, tries to fulfill the objects of his imagination, achieve the vision he has for himself
 - 'It's pretty, isn't it, old sport?'
 - Gatsby's car is yet another show of his materialism, of his desire to put of a façade of wealth and class in order to gain Daisy's approval
 - 'a rich cream colour, bright with nickel', ostentatious and gaudy
 - More of a sign of a man trying to show off his wealth than the refined elegance of a wealthy man with nothing to prove
- 'disconcerting ride'
 - 'Gatsby began leaving his elegant sentences unfinished and slapping himself indecisively on the knee of his caramel-coloured suit'

- Gatsby's polished, suave demeanor quickly falls apart here, something is clearly on his mind
- o 'what's your opinion of me, anyhow?', 'don't want you to get a wrong idea'
 - Gatsby clearly cares about what others think about him, of his standing in society despite his massive wealth
 - Hints that he knows about the rumours spread about him in C3 and C4
- o 'I'll tell you God's truth'
 - Heavily ironic, as Gatsby does anything but this, tells lies
 - Invokes God, may suggest the moral degradation of the 1920s as Gatsby showcases a disregard for the traditional Christian values that America was so reliant on prior
 - o Either way, this causes it to come off as empty
 - Claims that his parents are dead, clearly a lie as we see Mr Gatz in C9
 - Parents not wealthy at all, only at Oxford for 5 months (C7)
 - Nick notices how he 'swallowed it, choked on it', causing the whole statement to fall to pieces, once again displaying Nick's observant nature
 - 'Which part of the Middle West?', 'San Francisco'
 - San Francisco is nowhere near the Midwest, Gatsby was in fact born in North Dakota
 - Gatsby then proceeds to tell a host of lies and falsehoods, of a far-fetched story of adventure, war and honour
 - Nick's 'incredulity was submerged in fascination'
 - Gatsby then produces proof of his accomplishments, of a medal of the 'Orderi di Danilo' from Montenegro
 - o And then a photo of him from Oxford
 - Nick is then taken in by the story to some degree, accepting at least part of it as he states that he believed that 'it was all true'
- o 'I'm going to make a big request of you today'
 - Is this why Gatsby called on Nick? Is this why he made his acquaintance? So that Nick could be a pawn in Gatsby's elaborate machinations to sever Daisy from the clutches of Tom and reclaim the woman he was fixated on?
 - Either way, this suggests that Gatsby has ulterior motives for calling on Nick and attempting to gain his approval
 - Fitzgerald thus invites the reader to explore this, gaining the reader's interest as the enigmatic Gatsby now has an ulterior motive, as we do not know yet whether that may be sinister or benign
 - Note how Gatsby refuses to tell Nick outright what request this is
 - Suggests Gatsby's nerves, afraid that Nick would refuse it, thinking that Jordan would be more able to persuade Nick to agree to inviting Daisy to tea
- o 'I thought you ought to know something about me. I didn't want you to think I was just some nobody'
 - Confirms our perception of Gatsby that he wants people to think that he was a wealthy man of class and stature
- o Myrtle's 'panting vitality'

- Contrast this with her 'perceptible vitality' in C2, suggests that this is the true Myrtle, a labourer in the working-class, instead of the mistress of a wealthy man that derives her status from him
- Policeman
 - Introduced to us via the use of onomatopoeia of the sounds of his motorcycle, 'jug-jug-*spat!*'
 - Pulls Gatsby over for speeding
 - However, Gatsby then takes a 'white card from his wallet' and 'waved it before the man's eyes'
 - Showcases his tremendous influence
 - Gatsby claims that he 'was able to do the commissioner a favour once', but in fact we now know that Gatsby used his criminal influence, and likely had a number of policemen in his pocket
 - Readers may question whether his story was true in the first place, heightening the sense of mysteriousness about the character and his immense power and wealth
- 'Even Gatsby could happen, without any particular wonder'
 - Reference to the American Dream
 - Anything can happen in this country, even a man who creates a 'Platonic conception of himself' out of nothing and then proceeds to become it
 - A man who transforms dreams into reality by sheer force of will

Lunch

- Nick meets Meyer Wolfsheim
 - Described as a 'small, flat-nosed Jew' 'with two fine growths of hair which luxuriated in either nostril', tiny eyes' and an 'expressive nose'
 - Speaks about the shooting of 'Rosy Rosenthal'
 - Implies connections with gangs, the underbelly of New York
 - Gatsby, by affiliation, is also implied to have criminal connections, lending a rather sinister implication as to how he achieved his riches
 - Then presumes Nick was 'looking for a business connection'
 - Gatsby states that Nick isn't that man, further lending credence to the idea that Gatsby was a criminal
 - Meyer Wolfsheim also looks 'very slowly all around the room'
 - Cautious with regard to his safety, implies that he may have been an assassination target
 - Gatsby later also jumps up to make a call
 - Fitzgerald uses the shifty behaviour of Meyer Wolfsheim and Gatsby to heighten the sense of mystery as to the true nature of these two men, while simultaneously implying that something sinister was afoot
 - Has human molars for cuff buttons
 - 'Finest specimens of human molars'
 - Definitely not a pleasant man, and one likely to be very vicious, immoral and ruthless
 - Gatsby then says that 'He's the man who fixed the World's Series back in 1919'

- Nick is staggered at the idea that he can do so without being caught and put in jail
- Gatsby knows of this, and is able to tell Nick this without fear for his own safety as if it were a casual statement as to where he had lunch that day
 - Implying Gatsby's closeness in relationship and 'business' to Meyer Wolfsheim, heightening the sense in readers that Gatsby is guilty by association
 - And that Gatsby's source of wealth is unsavoury, having ties to the sort of organised crime with which Wolfsheim is associated
- Hence, theme of Corrupted American Dream
 - Gatsby does achieve success, but through what unscrupulous means? It is hinted in the novel that it is not through hard work, as we see him leaving St Olaf's college as he thought janitor work was beneath him. Rather, this is an unscrupulous trickster who gets his riches through ruthlessness, incredible dishonesty, and bootlegging
- Gatsby meets Tom Buchanan
 - 'strained, unfamiliar look of embarrassment came over Gatsby's face'
 - Gatsby is understandably uneasy at meeting the man whom his former love had married
 - Yet, we see his mask of affability and geniality crack, suggesting that there may be something more to this
 - The answer may be found in C7, where Nick states that 'I don't think he had ever really believed in its existence before'
 - Gatsby projects an image onto Daisy of the innocent young girl he once loved, of the manifestation of his dreams, yet this is no longer what she is anymore
 - This may be somewhat similar
 - He may, in fact, find the thought of her getting married to another man one that makes him very uneasy and uncomfortable
 - And may have found it very difficult to believe in before

Jordan

- For a stretch of a few pages, she becomes the narrator as Nick provides us with her account of the events that transpired in 1917
 - They discuss this as they are on what one can presume is a date at the Plaza Hotel
 - Note how Jordan looks up to Daisy as an elder, and thus provides a powerful account of the events that transpired in 1917-1918 from the point of view of a close friend and confidante
 - Daisy is 18 in 1917, and 'by far the most popular of all the young girls in Louisville'
 - We also see an example of gender roles in 1917 when Jordan says she 'had on a new plaid skirt that blew a little in the wind', and the banners in front of the houses 'stretched out stiff and said *tut-tut-tut-tut*, in a disapproving way' (female emancipation and common perception back then)
- Gatsby and Daisy
 - They are engrossed in each other, and we see a very powerful relationship in this chapter with love and passion on both sides

- 'The officer looked at Daisy... in a way that every young girl wants to be looked at sometime'
 - Gatsby is utterly infatuated with Daisy, see C8 from a narrative from his point of view
- Next paragraph more vague, Jordan does not know exactly what transpired
 - Fitzgerald deliberately creates a sense of mysteriousness in the novel once we consider that even after C8, we do not know what exactly happened
 - E.g. here on the possible implications of elopement with Gatsby, 'how her mother had found her packing her bag one winter night to go to New York and say good-bye to a soldier who was going overseas'
 - After, 'she didn't play around with the soldiers any more'
 - It is, however, very clear that she and Gatsby were very committed to the relationship, through the love and passion shown
 - And how it may be implied that Daisy attempted to elope
 - Yet, we don't know everything, much of what is written here is conjecture
- Daisy very conflicted after, in turmoil after thwarted romance
 - She appears gay again, but it is clear that she did love Gatsby, and the happiness she puts up may simply be a front as her actions on the night before her wedding suggests
 - Perhaps the conflicted Daisy who hung out with an older crowd was the real Daisy, rather than the one who was 'gay again'
 - She perhaps didn't know what to do with herself, especially since it is implied that there is heavy family pressure on her
 - She was 'presumably engaged to a man from New Orleans' in February, and married Tom in June
 - This suggests pressure to marry within her social class
 - Gatsby hence later tries to match the world of the rich elite with his house, parties, car, etc
 - Tom doesn't buy her love with a 'string of pearls', but rather it is more likely that Daisy marries Tom out of uncertainty and love and practicality who had money as implied in C8
 - Drunk before wedding, 'Daisy's change' her mine'
 - It is implied that the letter she had in her hand was a letter from Gatsby, compounding the conflict within her on who to love/marry
 - Element of mystery created by Fitzgerald as one does not know exactly what is inside the letter
 - She is conflicted between the men, has second thoughts and major regrets on choosing to marry Tom, clearly loves both men
 - This is a complex, multifaceted love triangle, and cannot simply be reduced to Daisy loving Gatsby or Daisy loving Tom as Gatsby seeks to do in C7
 - She wants to give the string of pearls back to Tom
 - The pearls in no way buy her hand in marriage, in contrast to other interpretations of this
 - She doesn't immediately jump at Tom, this force 'of love, of money, of unquestionable practicality'
 - But rather, she loves Tom and wants the security and certainty he provides, but also craves the

romance of her youth that had taken her in just the year before

- Daisy and Tom
 - 'married Tom Buchanan without so much of a shiver'
 - This doesn't show that she is a cold-blooded gold digger
 - Rather, this shows a form of strength of character, that she did love Gatsby, but still recognises the need to marry within her social class and the need for security, for a force 'of love, of money, of unquestionable practicality'
 - 'I saw them in Santa Barbara when they came back, and thought I'd never seen a girl so mad about her husband'
 - Note how Daisy is unable to say that she never did love Tom even when she detested him in C7
 - It is true that Daisy did really love Tom, and in fact was mad about him
 - These several sentences show real romantic tenderness between them in August (1918, depending on interpretation)
 - Jordan does not like Tom, so the fact that she recognises and admits this is striking in itself
 - This shows the complexity of human relationships, how romantic love shifts
 - Daisy was confused and conflicted, she loved both Tom and Gatsby and this caused her immense pain
 - 'ran into a wagon on the Ventura road one night... girl who was with him'
 - Very early in the relationship, Tom has an affair
 - Daisy quickly falls out of love with him
 - Tom is implied to be a serial womaniser in the novel
 - Interesting how he chases lower class women, almost as if he seeks escape from the prison of his own elite class
 - Alternatively, domination over other women through conquests, financially, romantically, etc.
 - 'moved with a fast crowd'
 - Suggests the emptiness of their marriage
 - Daisy trying to put up a brave front, similar to in autumn 1918 after Gatsby left for the war
- Daisy and Gatsby now
 - Daisy goes into Jordan's room, wakes her up, and asks who Gatsby is
 - 'she said in the strangest voice that it must be the man she used to know'
 - Hints that Daisy still loves Gatsby

Jordan and Gatsby's Request

- Gatsby makes a request through Jordan for Nick to invite Daisy over for tea, and allow him to come over
 - Note how Gatsby doesn't tell Nick outright what request this is, asks through Jordan
 - Suggests Gatsby's nerves, afraid that Nick would refuse it, thinking that Jordan would be more able to persuade Nick to agree to inviting Daisy to tea
 - Jordan also states that he wants Daisy to see his house, and Nick's house is just next door, making it very convenient
 - Materialism perhaps? Or perhaps it is Gatsby's admission that he needs to achieve a certain level of social class and social status to woo Daisy, the rich girl from old money

- 'The modesty of the demand shook me'
 - Here, Nick, aided by Jordan, realises the ridiculousness of Gatsby's actions
 - 'He had waited five years and bought a mansion where he dispensed starlight to casual moths – so that he could 'come over' some afternoon to a stranger's garden'
 - Jordan says that 'he half expected her to wander into one of his parties, some night'
 - Once again, proving that Gatsby's wealth, ridiculous spending, etc. is all for Daisy
- 'he says he's read a Chicago paper for years just on the chance of catching a glimpse of Daisy's name'
 - Gatsby is ridiculously in love with Daisy, even now
 - Fitzgerald thus makes the inevitable tragic ending of the story even more poignant through moments like this where Gatsby's love for Daisy is shown
 - When one considers that it isn't the real Daisy he loves, but rather the idealised image of her that represents his dreams and ambitions, this implies a tragic delusion that makes the story even sadder

Interesting how Nick agrees to Gatsby's indirect request

- As this is tantamount to inciting adultery between two people
- This is in a sense rationalised by Jordan's claim that this would allow Daisy to have love
 - However, perhaps New York is getting to Nick, in a similar sense to his actions in C2

Chapter 5: Gatsby and Daisy

Gatsby approaches Nick seeking to butter him up, Nick states his intention to invite Daisy over for tea, Gatsby seeks to repay him by offering an opportunity for some side business (Nick refuses), Gatsby is sleepless & nervous & irrational before Daisy comes by, Daisy arrives and she and Gatsby reunite in an incredibly awkward manner, before Gatsby breaks the ice by the time Nick returns, they go on a tour of Gatsby's house and Daisy shows her materialism with the shirts, Gatsby orders Klipspringer to play the piano, Nick leaves after he notices that he slowly becomes a third wheel and considering whether Daisy can live up to Gatsby's impression of her

Gatsby & Nick conversation > Gatsby nervous > Daisy's arrival > Tour > Piano > Nick leaves

Conversation

- Nick comes home after meeting Jordan in C4 and notices Gatsby's house 'lit from tower to cellar' and the 'whole corner of the peninsula was blazing with light'
 - Not a party this time, Fitzgerald implies that Gatsby was making sure that everything in his house was just right for Daisy's arrival
 - Note how Fitzgerald does not outright state this, but instead leaves it to the reader to guess the details (enigmatic Gatsby)
 - 'I have been glancing into some of the rooms'
 - Gatsby wants everything to be just perfect for Daisy's arrival, to convey the image of a cultured, wealthy man in her social class that is worthy of her affections to win her over
 - Daisy, at this point, is the object of his affections and the embodiment of all his desires
 - Gatsby then seeks to invite Nick out to Coney Island, or for a swim
 - Note how this is done at 2 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING
 - Evidently Gatsby is ridiculously off his rocker here
 - Nick doesn't exactly say this, but it is heavily implied that:
 - Gatsby wants to butter Nick up so he agrees to his request to bring Daisy over for tea
 - Gatsby is incredibly nervous and jittery at Nick's decision and the prospect of seeing Daisy, this is very very important to him
 - Nick tells Gatsby that he agrees
 - Gatsby, after expressing his desire to have Nick's grass cut (note how he wants every detail to be just perfect for her arrival), offers Nick an opportunity
 - He fumbles 'with a series of beginnings', and uncharacteristically stumbles in the conversation, perhaps showing a break in his façade, showing how the man is still incredibly nervous at getting in Nick's good books to maximise his chances of success at winning Daisy over
 - Offers Nick a job that 'wouldn't take up much of your time and you might pick up a nice bit of money'
 - Sinister undertones implying criminal connections in 'It happens to be a rather confidential sort of thing'
 - Nick declines this offer as this was 'obviously and tactlessly for a service to be rendered'
 - Does not like the idea of this as payment for his 'service' in arranging the meeting with Daisy

- Yet acknowledging at the time of writing that this would have been a very important decision had he made it
 - At the moment, his character makes him refuse the offer due to the implication of receiving payment for inviting his cousin over for tea
 - This can be taken to be show of integrity, yet this may be absurd once one considers the implications of Nick inviting a married woman over to meet a man whom she will likely begin an affair with
- Perhaps while Nick is disgusted by the moral decay in New York he sees around him, he is tolerant and tries not to judge others
 - Ironically, however, he helps facilitate an affair
 - Albeit one that could be justified by the opportunity for his cousin to acquire the love that was absent from a loveless marriage

Gatsby's nervousness

- Gatsby spares no expense in getting everything just right
 - It rains on the day of the meeting, yet he sends his gardener over to cut Nick's grass
 - Nick goes to buy flowers, yet after coming back he finds a delivery of flowers coming
 - Fitzgerald uses hyperbole to describe this as 'a greenhouse'
- Gatsby wears a 'white flannel suit, silver shirt and gold-coloured tie'
 - Gatsby attempts to project an image of affluence, yet this may come across as gaudy, in a similar fashion to his car and the hiring of the actress in the next chapter
 - 'pale, and there were dark signs of sleeplessness beneath his eyes'
 - 'added hollowly, '...old sport.'"
 - It is implied here that the catchphrase he so often uses is merely a construct used to project an image of sophistication, of the 'Oxford man' he claims to be
 - Gatsby seems to be a shell of himself, revealing in how the theatrical, over-the-top quality he often projects falls away, revealing a nervous, love-struck, awkward young man
 - A similar change in demeanor can be observed in Daisy
 - Before, her usual sardonic humour can be seen in how she jokes about Tom on the phone
 - Her charm in the 'exhilarating ripple of her voice'
 - But later her voice takes on a 'clear artificial note' when she says her first words to Gatsby in 5 years
 - Extent of the attraction between them shown in how their demeanours change significantly
 - And the awkward beginning to their meeting

Daisy's arrival

- Gatsby was 'reclining against the mantelpiece in a strained counterfeit of perfect ease'
 - Draws parallels with Gatsby's nature as a man who fakes his way into opportunities, from joining Dan Cody on his yacht, taking Daisy when he had no right to, and into wealth and riches

- Except here, we see the mask crack as Gatsby is reduced to a love-struck, nervous young man, showing the impact Daisy has on him
 - How 'his mind will never wander again'
- 'defunct mantelpiece clock'
 - Motif of time seen here
 - Fitzgerald implies that this moment, where Gatsby meets Daisy for the first time in five years, is so important that time stops
 - Also seen in 'running down like an overwound clock' later
 - Uses clocks to describe Gatsby's emotions, in a reference to Gatsby's statement that he can 'repeat the past', and perhaps even hint at the impossibility of such a thing
 - 'clock took the moment to tilt dangerously at the pressure of his head', 'turned and caught it with trembling fingers, and set it back in place', 'I think we all believed for a moment that it had smashed in pieces on the floor'
 - Perhaps a hint at the clumsiness of his efforts at repeating the past, and the fact that this cannot be truly done
- 'Five years next November'
 - Gatsby is obviously fixated with Daisy, this is a possible example of it
 - As Gatsby remembers the exact month where he had last seen Daisy
- Nick leaves, perhaps in the hope that his absence would help them reach 'an end'
 - Gatsby follows him into the kitchen, in a panic
 - Reduced to a panicking young man, we see the complete genuine article for a brief moment in this chapter, unfettered by the façade he puts up
 - 'You're acting like a little boy'
 - After walking outside, Nick describes Gatsby's house
 - Was built 'early in the 'period' craze, a decade before'
 - Another example of ridiculous extravagance in how supposedly the previous owner, a brewer, had wanted to pay the owners of the surrounding houses five years' taxes if their roofs were to be thatched with straw
 - Note how the neighbours refuse as they do not want to live like peasants
 - C5 suggests that they do so out of American pride, and that by following the American Dream, the wealthy end up imitating the old European social system of nobility and aristocracy they left behind
- After coming back, Gatsby and Daisy now in their own world
 - 'looking at each other as if some question had been asked, or was in the air, and every vestige of embarrassment was gone'
 - 'Daisy's face was smeared with tears'
 - Presumably tears of joy here, as 'Her throat, full of aching, grieving beauty, told only of her unexpected joy'
 - Note how Daisy's voice is described yet again by Nick
 - Gatsby 'literally glowed'
 - 'Oh, hello, old sport'
 - At the success in wooing Daisy, Gatsby regains his confidence, the rain also stops (pathetic fallacy for Gatsby's state of mind?)
- Gatsby's fibs
 - 'It took me just three years to earn the money that bought it'
 - Interesting, but certainly more believable than his next statement

- That he did inherit his money (he didn't, Ella Kaye took his inheritance from Dan Cody, a man who wasn't his real father), and he 'lost most of it in the big panic – the panic of the war' (he instead does incredibly well in the war as an officer of the 1st Infantry Division)
 - Telling that Nick states that Nick thought Gatsby 'hardly knew what he was saying'
- Gatsby answers with 'That's my affair' before realising it 'wasn't an appropriate reply'
 - Hint at criminal connections, shady character
 - 'I was in the drug business and then I was in the oil business. But I'm not in either one now'
- 'I keep it always full of interesting people, night and day. People who do interesting things. Celebrated people'
 - Not exactly the case
 - (night) Only holds parties to attract Daisy like a peacock preening its feathers, implied in how the parties stop once Daisy comes to one and doesn't like it
 - (day) House, in fact, may be filled with simple freeloaders, e.g. Klipspringer, a man who almost lives in Gatsby's mansion, taking advantage of his host's money but who never attends Gatsby's funeral, and only calls Nick after about a pair of tennis shoes that he left in Gatsby's mansion (hardly a case of a celebrated person)

Tour

- Fitzgerald gives us another vivid description of Gatsby's house through Nick
 - 'feudal silhouette against the sky'
 - 'sparkling odour of jonquils and the frothy odour of hawthorn and plum blossoms and the pale gold odour of kiss-me-at-the-gate'
 - 'Marie Antoinette music-rooms and Restoration Salons'
 - 'period bedrooms swathed in rose'
 - NOTE: This is very useful for comparison with other areas, e.g. the 'unprosperous and bare' interior of Wilson's garage
 - Also reminiscent of European aristocracy
- 'He hadn't once ceased looking at Daisy, and I think he revalued everything in his house according to the measure of response it drew from her well-loved eyes'
 - Note how Gatsby pays so much attention to Daisy, and finds her opinion on his belongings to be the be all and end all of it
 - He does this later on in C6, as he ceases the parties he holds after Daisy attends one of them and dislikes it
 - Everything, in a sense, could possibly be for Daisy, as Gatsby ties his dreams of success to her
 - Recall how 'his mind would never romp again' at end of C6
- 'He had passed visibly through two states and was entering upon a third'
 - 'After his embarrassment and his unreasoning joy he was consumed with wonder at her presence'
 - 'He had been full of the idea so long, dreamed it right through to the end'
 - 'running down like an overwound clock'

- Nick provides us with a quick summary of Gatsby's rapidly fluctuating emotional state, from embarrassment to joy to wonder
- Gatsby is clearly in love with Daisy, or at least the idea of what she represents to him and the idealised image of her he has in his mind, such that he dreams of it
- We again see the motif of time rear its head again, referencing Gatsby's claim that he can 'repeat the past', and in reference to his state of mind
- 'They're such beautiful shirts'
 - Daisy gets emotional over Gatsby's shirts
 - Slightly mystifying, confusing reaction
 - Fitzgerald in a sense creates a confusing feeling for the reader on this, makes us conjecture about this
 - Multiple possible responses form the reader, good example of ambiguity of text, multiple possible interpretations
 - Joy of being in love, perhaps?
 - But also a sense of disappointment, does she feel sad and disappointment that she threw five years away with Tom Buchanan
 - Perhaps also indicative of superficiality, she cries over coloured shirts as if she had been mourning
 - Could it be that this is a display of materialism, of the consumer culture of the 1920s
- 'green light that burns all night at the end of your dock'
 - 'Possibly it had occurred to him that the colossal significance of that light had now vanished forever'
 - Gatsby now has Daisy right next to him, he has the affluence he had dreamed of, the light is no longer as significant to him as he has it
 - Nick hints that Daisy might not live up to the image Gatsby had of her in his mind, or the idealised image of the young, innocent girl who he had projected his hopes and dreams onto
- Photograph of 'elderly man in yachting costume', 'hung on the wall over his desk'
 - Dan Cody, his 'best friend years ago'
 - No pictures of his parents, Dan Cody, in a sense, is the father he adopts for himself, showing the extent to which Gatsby's self-belief allows him to believe he can dictate his life
- Gatsby then demands that Klipspringer play the piano
- 'There must have been moments even that afternoon when Daisy tumbled short of his dreams'
 - Nick hints that Daisy might not live up to the image Gatsby had of her in his mind, or the idealised image of the young, innocent girl who he had projected his hopes and dreams onto
 - Simple explanation: Have you ever had a crush you really wanted to get together with? You may have thought of this boy/girl as a wonderful person, the ideal partner, etc., but he/she might not have lived up to those expectations after you got to know them.
 - Gatsby goes a step further, doing this 5 years removed from the last time he had contact with Daisy, and also projects his dreams of success onto her, idolising her as the manifestation of his dreams.

- Gatsby seems to have idealized Daisy in his mind to the extent that the real Daisy, will likely not fulfill his expectations
 - This of course, all ends tragically as Daisy goes back to Tom after knocking over Myrtle as Gatsby takes the blame
- Backed up by quote 'not through her own fault, but because of the colossal vitality of his illusion'
 - Gatsby's self-belief and belief that he can make his dreams into reality, impose his vision onto the world seen in how Nick states that 'No amount of fire or freshness can challenge what a man can store up in his ghostly heart'

Chapter 6: Gatsby's Past, Party

'Just why these inventions... not easy to say'

- Reader always has a sense that there is something strange about Gatsby
 - Gatsby hails from Midwest, 'mister nobody from nowhere'
 - Gatz, vaguely Eastern European or Jewish, maybe an indication as to why he gets along so well with Wolfsheim, immigrant
 - James a very common name, feeling of being common, a nobody is what he tries to escape from, hence he changes his name to make it sound more refined, more fashionable, *conjuring up images of being respectable*, etc. (Anglicisation)
- Gatsby
 - Name sounds odd, slightly clumsy, he makes mistakes even as a skilled conman
 - Tries to make it sound appealing, but sounds slightly awkward
 - Gives it a slight sense of irony in the title, even alliteration sounds slightly unappealing
 - Likewise, Jay is too extraordinary, too different to really work
 - Changes name at age 17, when he begins career and meets Dan Cody
 - 'the beginning of his career'
 - As if he decides to begin career, to plan it out
 - Never told how he leaves his family, wanders around on his own without a thought for his poor parents
 - Parents hurt, evoked in C9 of novel as we meet his father, completely incorrect picture of his son as he thinks his son really did care about him
 - In reality, evidence suggests Gatsby wanted nothing to do with his parents
 - Desire to reinvent himself very important aspect of text
 - Ties in with concept of American Dream, that anyone can succeed based on their own merits, you can become somebody you are not
 - You don't have to be James Gatz from North Dakota, you can become Jay Gatsby and schmooze with the rich elite
 - Rags to riches truly encapsulated with the figure of Gatsby
 - Character truly reinvents himself, becomes someone totally different
 - Yet, something off-putting about his desire to leave everything behind, even his parents, Fitzgerald explores aspect of American Dream in detail and with multiple views on it
 - Power of it, yet criticises it too
 - Gatsby ultimately fails in his endeavour, critical view on it if a man like Gatsby fails, cannot remake himself completely, this suggests something is wrong about the American Dream
 - He may be socially mobile, but he does so through unscrupulous means and fails to overcome the 'indiscernible barbed wire' in the end
 - 'loafing around on the beach'
 - At 17, he isn't committed to a programme of self improvement
 - Maybe as a boy, but not now (father has warped perception)

- Suggests American Dream may be corrupted, he doesn't entirely work hard as he doesn't really go to college
 - He instead cons his way into success
 - Represents idea of American desire for instant transformation
 - Has an immense degree of pure luck, meets Dan Cody that afternoon, encounters Meyer Wolfsheim when he had not eaten in two days (see C9)
- Goes out for yacht, suggests he cons his way onboard, becomes a personal assistant out of luck, determination to get onboard, and his smooth tongue
 - Gives weather advice
 - Implied Dan Cody takes a liking to Gatsby as they are both 'roughnecks', Nick sees Gatsby as this in C3
 - Also suggests Gatz had been Gatsby for quite some time before, waiting for it to be put into action
- Extraordinary power of imagination, romantic readiness to dream dreams
 - Never really accepted his parents as his parents at all
- Romantic readiness (see C1, explanation copied here for ease)
 - Romantic, in the normal sense of popular romance, where he, the romantic man chasing the woman of his dreams, is ready to be in love
 - But also another sense of romantic, of the world of the romantic poets
 - They write about the mystery of the world, of creation, the sense of independence and strong individuality
 - Fitzgerald almost suggests both within the novel
- 'Platonic conception of himself'
 - Serious implication in this as Gatsby sees himself as a perfect conception of life above ordinary mortality, hence he can have whatever he wants, transcend time
 - Power of his imagination
 - 'son of God'
 - Sees himself as a Christ like figure, representing a kind of perfection
 - Deliberate biblical allusion, 'must be about His Father's business'
 - To Jesus telling Mary what he was up to in the temple as a child
 - However, we see that Gatsby was in service of a vulgar, meretricious, materialism
 - Nothing to his dreams other than that, beyond making vast amounts of money and getting whatever he wants
 - Hence, critique on capitalist values, only thing that counts is vulgarity and acquiring pointless wealth, etc
- One side of us admires Gatsby for his vision, drive, etc.
- Yet the other despises him, Nick: 'he represented... unaffected scorn'
 - Represents cheap vulgarity, pointless extravagance, etc.
 - We are conflicted about Gatsby, because Nick is conflicted about him and Nick has a significant influence on our perceptions of the characters
- 'seventeen-year-old-boy'
 - We always have an adolescent impression of Gatsby, in his infatuation with Daisy, his desire to have everything he wants, etc.
 - NOTE: Daisy becomes the kind of incarnation, manifestation of his dreams of great success, embodies that, he does love her, but he projects this onto his

impression of Daisy, and when he finally gets her he realises this is not necessarily what she is, she is no longer the young girl, neither is she the manifestation of his dreams

- 'He knew women early'
 - We have to understand that he isn't some kind of noble, virgin young man who falls in love with a girl
 - He's quite brutal with them, using them and manipulating them as a charmer and manipulator
 - Daisy is a turning point due to what she represents
 - Utterly narcissistic, in love with what he represents
 - Nick shows great psychological insight to Gatsby, very penetrating thoughts, all from Gatsby telling Nick what happened
- Imagination
 - 'constant, turbulent riot', very active imagination and vision
 - 'fantastic conceits'
 - Whatever he wants in life, represented with the cheap, vulgar beauty and gaudiness he represents in the party, etc.
- Time as the enemy
 - 'clock ticked on the washstand'
 - Life slipping him by, he has these dreams but all the time the clock is ticking against him
 - Incoherent dreams of wild success and fantastic riches, etc.
- 'moon... floor'
 - Idea of magic, magical change
 - Sounds rather foolish, but he has achieved this fantastic success he has dreamed of
 - Manifests itself in parties, fantastic spending, etc.
 - Each night, he imagines success until he falls asleep
 - Shows him that you can transform dreams into reality from sheer force of personality, he does do so in the end as he achieves the success he dreams of
 - 'rock... wing'
 - World is something you can transform, you can do things in your imagination
- You can transform dreams into reality, Gatsby is part of the message, but can be seen positively and negatively
- 'stayed there two weeks... pay his way through'
 - Gave up on college, as he did not want to work as a janitor, did not really desire to work hard in order to get rich
 - He doesn't really achieve the American Dream via hard work, it's rather via trickery, etc.
 - He did work hard as an 8 year old, but it is suggested that he did not really do so here once he grew up
 - Layer of complexity to character, perhaps he does work hard, but instead on something else other than the conventional aspect of success
- Fitzgerald draws on tradition of huge amounts of luck, exploiting God's gifts, in this rags to riches story as Gatsby meets Dan Cody
 - Dan Cody's picture kept next to Gatsby's bed, not his own parents

- Implies that Gatsby adopts Dan Cody as his father, sign of his extraordinary to reinvent himself, changes not only his name but his parents
- Dan Cody sees something of himself in Gatsby, etc.
 - Dan Cody a roughneck, also another representative of the American Dream, earns his millions via metal industry
- o Gatsby also protects Dan Cody from women preying on his money
- o 'yacht represents... of the world'
 - Shows the extent of his imagination and materialism, projects something else onto something in a similar fashion to projecting his dreams onto Daisy
- o 'smiled at Cody'
 - Gatsby has an enchanting smile, manipulative person, also seen in C3 with Nick
 - Suggests he develops this in C9, 'practice elocution and poise'
- o 'quick and extravagantly ambitious'
 - Street-smart, quick-minded, ambitious, sets him up for success
 - Becomes a PA for Cody in only a few days
 - 'steward, mate, skipper... jailor'
 - Very very capable, protects Dan Cody for a whole five years until Dan Cody dies and Gatsby is in his early twenties
 - o Hints that Ella Kaye had killed him, very vague
 - o Sense of terrible corruption and nastiness not explicitly spelled out, as Gatsby loses inheritance, etc
 - This is seen throughout text, in Gatsby's charm but ruthlessness, Wolfsheim's affability but unscrupulous nature, etc.
 - Note that Gatsby does not drink due to Cody, learns things from his life experience, suggests his quick mind and desire to learn things from other people
 - Sees danger in getting drunk as women prey on Dan Cody
 - Calculating ruthlessness, will not let women prey on him but would much rather take advantage of them
 - Gatsby then loses inheritance
 - Twenty-five thousand dollars in 1912-1913
 - o 'He didn't get it'
 - o Short sentence, simple sentence, reflects his anger
 - Implied that he was robbed of the money by Ella Kaye
 - o Nasty, grim story behind this, potentially Ella as a kind of murderess fools his assistant who was trying to protect him out of it
 - Yet, he bounces back from his setbacks, using whatever he had gotten from Dan Cody, his 'singularly appropriate education', on how money might be made by a ruthless, adventurous roughneck, to get into officer training school and then his millions
- Nick then tells the reader that he was told this only later (C8, after crash, the dawn after)
 - o 'with the idea of exploding those first wild rumours about his antecedents'
 - o Nick intends to use this to dispel misconceptions the reader may have about Gatsby, through an intriguing story of his past, Fitzgerald draws the reader in through this

Sloans

- Rich elite try to exclude the new money in story, this is very important for this point
 - Gatsby treated in a very humiliating way by Mr Sloane, Tom, even after they were invited in by Gatsby
 - Mrs Sloane had too much to drink, perhaps found Gatsby attractive, she foolishly drops an invitation to dinner to the clear horror of Mr Sloane and Tom Buchanan
 - Shows social gulf between old money and new money

Gatsby's Party

- Fitzgerald creates a deliberate contrast between this party and the previous ones
 - Before, emphasis on glamour, enchantment
 - Here, emphasis on staleness, disappointment in the party here
 - P100, even Nick feels this, feels a sort of harshness, 'unpleasantness in the air', realises that Daisy sees this as cheap and vulgar and Nick can see it from her point of view
 - Note Daisy is not a snob, she tries to enjoy herself but still feels disappointment
 - 'these things excite me so'
 - Gatsby points out famous Hollywood actress, Daisy praises her
 - A good example of meretricious, vulgar beauty, has enough money to afford this actress and shows off how lovely he is
 - Daisy and Gatsby dance together
 - Note Gatsby is a very good dancer, suggests he had learnt this from Dan Cody
 - Another example of him being able to act out a role and behave well in these situations
 - Tom on the other hand is
 - 'Tom's arrogant eyes roamed the crowd'
 - Ironical, as he seems to enjoy the party
 - 'A fellow's getting off some funny stuff'
 - Enjoys a comedy, chases women as well (Daisy jokes about this)
 - Doesn't want to enjoy the party, yet he does anyway
 - Uncouth behaviour
 - 'head stuck in a pool'
 - 'screaming like that'
 - Women get drunk, make fools about themselves, Daisy hence gets disappointed by this
 - 'wasn't a gesture, but an emotion', it was a real emotion, she was genuinely upset by the rawness and vulgarity of the people around her
 - 'appalled by West Egg', as a girl from a conservatively wealthy background

- Cross reference to C3, East Egg in a corner having a party on their own
- Gatsby miserable as Daisy didn't like it
 - This is the last party due to this
 - Reinforces what Daisy now means to Gatsby, doesn't really want anything else apart from her
 - Parties were all for her
- Important quote, 'She saw something awful in the very simplicity she failed to understand'
 - 'simplicity' also appears in C3 to refer to the party, 'simplicity of the heart'
 - The partygoers came down just to have fun, an 'amusement park'
 - But when Daisy, the target of Gatsby's dreams, finally attends the party, her response is not what he was looking for
 - She is not impressed, but is disgusted by it, as the East Eggers who sat in a corner of the party in C3
 - In contrast to his expectations that she would love it
 - Implies that the whole love story was meant to fail
 - Not necessarily due to social class or an 'indiscernible barbed wire' between them, but due to idealised images and a resulting mismatch of expectations

Time as enemy

- 'You can't repeat the past', 'Why of course you can!'
 - Belief that he can have whatever he wants, make the world however he wants it to be, can go back to this romanticised past where they were happy together

Gatsby and Nick's conversation

- Gatsby and Nick then have a conversation where Gatsby 'talked a lot about the past'
 - Nick understands that Gatsby had 'wanted to recover something, some idea of himself perhaps, that had gone into loving Daisy', making his life 'confused and disordered since then'
 - Recall 'Can't repeat the past?', 'Why of course you can!'
 - Is this what he wants to recover? These days with Daisy Fay, before she became a Buchanan? Or rather the unbridled ambition and dreams of the young man that was James Gatz before he was shackled to the dream of Daisy, such that 'his mind would never romp again like the mind of God'
 - Shows how he may not necessarily be attracted to Daisy, just his idealised dream of her
 - Gatsby thinks that money can accomplish his idealistic, unrealistic dream of getting the same 18 year old Daisy Fay back, chasing an image of her rather than her
 - Gatsby is quite deluded, chasing an impossible dream, yet the reader cannot help but respect the indomitable will this man shows, of a vision that he is determined to impose on reality as if he was God himself
- The following two paragraphs describe events in 1917, 5 years prior in Camp Taylor, Louisville
 - Gatsby tells Nick this after the party

- o The first of two times Gatsby tells Nick about the past, with the second being the dawn after Myrtle's death
- Tale of how Gatsby kisses Daisy, has somehow wed himself to her, making him attached to her throughout the remaining 5 years of his life
 - o Very poetic language, 'pap of life', 'milk of wonder'
 - o Very open to interpretation, this is deliberate by Fitzgerald
 - Makes this relationship between them very powerful and emotionally engaging via its ambiguity
 - o Shows Gatsby being very emotionally involved with Daisy 5 years before

Interpretation of Gatsby and Daisy's Relationship

- Daisy represents a manifestation of everything Gatsby wants
 - o He projects his dreams of success onto Daisy, she comes to represent these dreams to him
 - o From this day on he ties success to getting Daisy back, rather than his previous unbridled ambition where his mind would romp 'like the mind of God'
 - o Perhaps it can be said that he doesn't love her so much for who she is but rather what she represents to him
- 'two changes of the year'
 - o Late summer, autumn, time of change of the seasons
 - Symbolic, as for Gatsby, this is a time of transformation and change
- 'pap of life'
 - o Highly charged, mysterious language
 - o Implies that he chooses not to climb the ladder to success alone, and instead ties himself to Daisy's success
 - 'wed his unutterable visions to her perishable breath'
 - Will no longer have the freedom to dream whatever dreams he used to dream as James Gatz, the boy by the river, but rather he connects his strange, incoherent dreams of success to her
 - Tying success to the idea of winning Daisy over, from that moment on he works towards affluence for the purpose of impressing Daisy, bouncing higher and higher and wearing the gold hat for the purpose of moving her towards him
 - o See opening quote
- 'Then he kissed her'
 - o Simple sentence in contrast to previous complex sentences filled with imagery
 - o Fitzgerald reduces this to simple physical description, using the contrast to provide emphasis on this, drawing the reader's attention to it and inviting the reader to picture this in the reader's mind
- 'incarnation was complete'
 - o Fitzgerald perhaps makes a biblical allusion here
 - Allusion to Christ with religious overtones present, as Christ is the incarnation, the embodiment of God who came to Earth
 - o Daisy here has become the incarnation of all of Gatsby's dreams
 - Explains his obsession with her as if she was the Holy Grail, the golden girl
 - However, as Nick implies in C5, she is not that, quite an ordinary individual
 - Gatsby does not see this initially, he is quite taken by her in C5, C6

- C7, however, we see him state that 'her voice is full of money'
 - The movie has Gatsby say this in a very dreamy tone implying he is in love with her and that he is very materialistic, yet this may not be the case
 - Another possible interpretation more pertinent to the point here below
 - Perhaps Gatsby has a realisation here, he may have some degree of self-awareness as to his infatuation with Daisy
 - Conveying the complexity of the ideas in the novel, of love and materialism and projection of ambitions, desires by characters
- Nick in this conversation
 - Nick is quite done with Gatsby's 'appalling sentimentality'
 - But he also sees his romantic readiness, responding to it
 - Nick is conflicted here, a complex narrator, this stance he has here mimics his stance in many other parts of the novel, especially on Gatsby

Chapter 7: Confrontation, Crash, and Conflict

End of parties, Buchanans' House, Trip through Valley of Ashes, Plaza Hotel Confrontation, Crash and Aftermath, Gatsby's Vigil, Gatsby's Solitude

End parties>Buchanans>Valley of Ashes>Plaza Hotel>Crash>Vigil

End of parties

- 'as obscurely as it had begun, his career as Trimalchio was over'
 - Gatsby mysteriously stops holding parties, we know this is due to Daisy's disapproval and disappointment in the previous chapter
 - 'So the whole caravansary had fallen in like a card house at the disapproval in her eyes'
 - Gatsby holds these parties in an attempt to attract Daisy, as if he was a peacock preening his feathers
 - He works towards affluence for the purpose of impressing Daisy, bouncing higher and higher and wearing the gold hat for the purpose of moving her towards him
 - At the idea of her disapproval, however, he stops the parties almost immediately, showing how he did this purely for Daisy
 - It was all for her, he values things according to how she sees them, C5 'I think he revalued everything in his house according to the measure of response it drew from her well-loved eyes'
- 'dismissed every servant in his house a week ago', 'general opinion in the village was that the new people weren't servants at all'
 - Gatsby mysteriously dismisses every servant in his house, replacing them with people of mysterious origin
 - Answer hinted at in 'unfamiliar butler with a villainous face'
 - Hints at criminal connections, that these are anything but servants
 - Gatsby's criminal connections are once again referred to in this chapter, first here and later in Tom's accusations
 - Again, Corrupted American Dream rears its head
 - Gatsby wanted 'somebody who wouldn't gossip', as Daisy 'comes over quite often'
 - Wary of gossip in the Eggs, like Tom in C2 with Myrtle
 - The two men are perhaps more similar than they think

Buchanans' House

- 'The next day was broiling'
 - Hottest day of the summer, similar to Outsider perhaps in how the heat drives the characters within the novel to do things they would not have done otherwise
 - Irrational decisions, anger, rage, etc.
 - Meursault kills the Arab, Tom and Gatsby face off
 - 'The straw seats of the car hovered on the edge of combustion'
 - Nick may be slightly delirious, in fact, because he writes something very peculiar
 - 'The master's body!' roared the butler into the mouthpiece. 'I'm sorry, madame, but we can't furnish it—it's far too hot to touch this noon!' What he really said was: 'Yes ... yes ... I'll see.'

- 'Daisy and Jordan lay upon an enormous couch, like silver idols, weighing down their own white dresses against the singing breeze of the fans.'
 - Recall C1, 'buoyed up as though upon an anchored balloon'
 - 'buoyed up' contrasted with 'weighing down'
 - 'anchored balloons' symbolise lack of freedom, but in a lighthearted manner, hints at gender roles within the novel
 - Female emancipation occurs, but women expected to cook and clean, be subservient, dependent on husbands (e.g. Daisy despite Tom's infidelity)
 - Echoed here in C7, 'silver idols', in a heavier tone
 - 'silver idols' symbolise something precious but burdensome
- Tom to Wilson
 - Cryptic conversation on the telephone
 - Tom says he won't sell the car to Wilson
 - George Wilson, unbeknownst to the reader yet, has an inkling that his wife is cheating on him and wants to make some money of Tom's car to go West with his wife to effectively end Myrtle's affair with Tom
 - Tom does not know this yet, is merely annoyed with Wilson
 - Note how Tom treats Wilson badly while he has an affair with Wilson's wife
- Daisy cannot hide her love for Gatsby
 - 'You know I love you'
 - Ironical, as this love is contrasted with the cold pragmatism she displays at the end of the chapter when she leaves him to go back to Tom
 - This may not be due to her being especially cold-blooded or fickle, but rather her being aware of Gatsby's true nature
 - That he had lied to her, is not what he seems to be, she cannot elope with a criminal as a woman of high society, let alone a man who lied to her and in that regard is no better than her husband
- Gatsby and Daisy's child
 - 'I don't think he had ever really believed in its existence before'
 - Usage of the third person neutral pronoun 'it' normally used to refer to animals and the like particularly significant
 - Presumably, it is implied that he believed that Daisy never really loved Tom
 - Image of an innocent, pure maiden, but Daisy is a married mother
 - Gatsby is in shock, disbelief at the contrast between his mental image of Daisy and the woman herself
 - Contrast this with the motif of time, his belief that he can repeat the past, implications that Gatsby's labours are in vain
- Daisy's inability to hide her love for Gatsby lets Tom catch on
 - 'Their eyes met, and they stared together at each other, alone in space', 'You always look so cool'
 - Nick implies that this is equivalent to her saying she loved him, and that Tom had caught on to this
 - Tom is visibly affected, will be revisited later
 - Tom shows heavy anger
 - 'Women get these notions in their heads'
 - Chauvinistic ideas rear their head once again in Tom's anger
- 'Her voice is full of money'

- Nick comments on Daisy's voice, fitting as he offers us descriptions of it throughout the novel, borderline obsessive quality to it
 - This 'inexhaustible charm' from it
- Gatsby states that is full of money, two possible interpretations
 - One is of materialism
 - This odd comparison says something about his morals and what he considers important
 - Implying that he doesn't love the woman for who she is, but rather as a trophy, the manifestation of his hopes and dreams
 - Or, perhaps Gatsby has the realisation here that he may have some degree of self-awareness as to his infatuation with Daisy (see C6)
 - Conveying the complexity of the ideas in the novel, of love and materialism and projection of ambitions, desires by characters
- 'You can buy anything at a drug-store nowadays'
 - Seemingly pointless remark, Tom fires a shot at Gatsby
 - Implying that Tom knows about Gatsby's criminal bootlegging
 - Hinted at in C6, revealed later in C8
 - Gatsby's reaction of 'an indefinable expression, at once definitely unfamiliar and vaguely recognisable', shows that he knows what Tom is talking about
 - Fitzgerald thus hints to the reader that these rumours, seen in C6 and now revisited here have some element of the truth to them
 - Mystery of Gatsby, who is this man, at the forefront of the attentive reader's mind due to this
 - There is something sinister about the expression on his face, hints of a ruthless criminal

Valley of Ashes

- Wilson
 - George Wilson is obviously affected, there is something wrong with him
 - 'gazed hollow-eyed at the car'
 - 'face was green'
 - Wilson ironically acts in a similar way to Tom, as he imprisons his wife and attempts to force her to move elsewhere
 - The man that was once beholden to his wife now shows a different side to him, as he, like Tom, faces the possibility of losing his partners
 - Both men are willing to fight to keep their wives and do what is necessary to keep them regardless of cost, and to get back at who they perceive is threatening their relationship
 - Later, Tom 'was feeling the hot whips of panic'
 - It dawns upon him that 'His wife and his mistress, until an hour ago secure and inviolate, were slipping precipitately from his control'
 - A possible interpretation is that Tom and Wilson are in the same position, separated by the circumstances between them in contrast to Gatsby being a foil to Tom
 - 'it occurred to me that there was no difference between men, in intelligence or race, so profound as the difference between the sick and the well'

- Myrtle
 - Nick's observant nature allows him to notice something else
 - Myrtle gazes down upon the scene, mistaking Jordan Baker for Tom's wife, and looks down in jealousy and terror
 - Sets the stage for her accident later, assuming that the yellow car is Tom's, and rushing out to meet what she perceives is Tom
 - The reader thus gets a sense after the events of this chapter that the crash was avoidable, and a product of the circumstances that happen in this chapter

Plaza Hotel

- Confrontation
 - Sparked by Tom
 - First by mocking Gatsby's expression 'old sport'
 - Later questions Gatsby's claim that he was an Oxford man in an attempt to discredit him in the eyes of Daisy
 - Gatsby refutes this by telling the truth that he was allowed to go there after the war, but why he only stayed there five months is left to the reader for now
 - It is revealed later in C8 that 'some complication or misunderstanding' in fact was responsible for sending him there, and he in fact tried frantically to get home
 - Daisy's letter, presumably telling him that she was getting married, reached him at Oxford, and it was then that Gatsby returned to America
 - Nick has 'one of those renewals of complete faith in him that I'd experienced before'
 - Nick is conflicted about Gatsby, this is another example of this
 - 'What kind of row are you trying to cause in my house anyhow' begins the quarrel
 - Tom's hypocrisy
 - 'I suppose the latest thing is to sit back and let Mr Nobody from Nowhere make love to your wife'
 - 'Once in a while I go off on a spree and make a fool of myself, but I always come back and in my heart I love her all the time'
 - Ridiculous assertions, when he has an affair with Myrtle himself, and it is highly unlikely that he loves his wife when he does this
 - Rather, his frantic attempts to get Daisy back could possibly be more of a sign of a desire for control, of maintaining the status quo
 - 'The trouble is that sometimes she gets foolish ideas in her head and doesn't know what she's doing'
 - Male chauvinist attitude once again seen in Tom's words and actions, prevalent throughout novel
 - Gatsby's delusions
 - 'She only married you because I was poor and she was tired of waiting for me'
 - This statement is incongruous with what we know so far

- o One, Daisy did really love Tom (see C4)
 - o Two, Gatsby had allowed Daisy to believe that he was of the same social class as her (see C8)
- He believes that Daisy had never loved Tom
 - But that is not true, 'I did love him once – but I loved you too'
 - o Highlights the complexity of human relationships, the shades of grey present in the novel
- o Tom discredits Gatsby
 - On bootlegging, betting, and the like
 - Gatsby's ruthlessness shown in how he puts a man in prison
 - Murderous nature implied in his expression
 - o Gossip thus had a strange undercurrent of truth
 - Gatsby tries to defend himself to Daisy, but unsuccessfully
 - 'only the dead dream fought on as the afternoon slipped away, trying to touch what was no longer tangible, struggling unhappily, undespairingly, toward that lost voice across the room'
 - Gatsby has been discredited in the eyes of Daisy
 - o Daisy could not leave with a man who had lied to her, she doesn't know the man in front of her now
 - o In no way would she, the scion of a notable wealthy family married to a husband of incredible financial security, leave him for a man who appears to be a common criminal
 - 'Her frightened eyes told that whatever intentions, whatever courage she had had, were definitely gone'
- o Nick then realises that that day is his birthday, and he is thirty
- o Tom allows Daisy to leave with Gatsby, confident that he has bested Gatsby and that Daisy would no longer run away from him
 - In fact, this decision dooms Myrtle, as if Tom had been going home with Daisy Tom would have been driving, not Daisy
 - Sense of pity, of what could have been as the accident could have been avoided

Accident

- Next segment from the perspective of Michaelis, the young Greek who ran the coffee joint beside the ashheaps
 - o Presumably Nick gets this segment from the inquest
- George Wilson
 - o 'sick in his office'
 - The thought of his wife cheating on him has made him physically sick, and frantically trying to earn money to move west
 - o 'I've got my wife locked in up there'
 - This has also brought a different side to him, a side that his neighbour Michaelis had never seen before
 - 'He was his wife's man and not his own' back then
 - o After the accident, George Wilson is deranged, to an extent
 - Giving a high, horrible call of 'Oh, my Ga-od!'
- Nick, Tom and Jordan learn of the scene from Michaelis and the Policeman
 - o The car never stopped, hit and run

- o Tom tells Wilson of his innocence, that the car was Gatsby's not his
 - Everyone assumes that Gatsby was driving
- Tom
 - o Visibly affected by Myrtle's death, it is revealed that he does care
 - 'a low husky sob', 'tears were overflowing down his face'
 - o This unpleasant, racist, chauvinist thug actually has a different side to him, he truly does care about Myrtle

Aftermath

- Nick is visibly disgusted by the events and the people of the day, including Jordan
 - o 'I'd had enough of all of them for one day, and suddenly that included Jordan too'
 - o 'she turned abruptly away and ran up the porch steps into the house'
- Gatsby's nobility
 - o In the conversation with Nick that follows
 - Nick's impression of him was that initially 'I disliked him so much by this time'
 - o Gatsby then reveals that Daisy was driving, 'but of course I'll say I was'
 - He does not have to do this, but he does it anyway, Daisy never tells the truth
 - Gatsby is revealed to be more than just a wealthy spendthrift or a crooked criminal, we see a nobility in him here
 - o Although the gossip about Gatsby has a strange undercurrent of truth, on Gatsby's ruthlessness and nature as a dangerous man, we also see a certain nobility and charm despite his past as a ruthless gangster (C4, C6, C7)
 - Gatsby stays up to keep vigil over Daisy, taking the blame for the accident while she, in a sense, betrays him inside the house
 - Another side of this multifaceted, very complex character shown
- Daisy and Tom go back to status quo, of 'an unmistakable air of natural intimacy', where 'anybody would have said that they were conspiring together'

Dissolution of Gatsby's dream

- 'So I walked away and left him standing there in the moonlight – watching over nothing'
 - o In other instances, we see Gatsby alone in the novel, e.g. C1 at the dock and C3 at the party
 - o Here, his dream is gone, the moon is sombre, and the green light has died out
 - Also see quotes from the chapter
 - 'only the dead dream fought on as the afternoon slipped away'
 - 'I think he realizes that his presumptuous little flirtation is over'
- Gatsby has lost what he was striving for all these years, from the very moment he kissed Daisy and his dreams of success and wealth were forevermore tied to her
 - o Sense of tragedy seen here, we will later see a hopeless, different Gatsby in C8

Chapter 8: Gatsby's Past and Death

Backstory of Jay Gatsby, Breakup with Jordan, Wilson's Deranged State, Death of Gatsby

Backstory of Jay Gatsby

- This backstory on Gatsby and Daisy in 1917 elaborates on the last three paragraphs of C6
 - Nick sees Gatsby the morning after the crash, Nick has a feeling that Gatsby may be in danger
 - Nick urges Gatsby to leave, but Gatsby refuses
 - 'He was clutching at some last hope'
 - He wouldn't consider it, wouldn't leave Daisy until he knew for sure what he was going to do
 - "Jay Gatsby" had broken up like glass against Tom's hard malice'
 - Implies that Jay Gatsby was nothing more than a façade, and Gatsby's carefully crafted exterior was now cracked after Tom had broken him
 - Gatsby almost doesn't care about anything other than Daisy anymore, doesn't really occur to him that he might die
 - Ironical that Nick, a much less experienced character with regard to death, murder and the like sees this
 - Weather is cool, in contrast to the hot summer day in the previous chapter
 - Fitzgerald implicitly establishes a connection between the weather and the emotional atmosphere of the story
 - Gatsby's tension-filled confrontation with Tom took place on the hottest day of the summer, beneath a fiery and intense sun
 - Now the fire has gone out of Gatsby's life with Daisy's decision to remain with Tom, the weather suddenly cools, and autumn creeps into the air
 - Note how Gatsby cannot accept Daisy's decision, still clings on to the hope that summer has not ended and Daisy still wants to elope with him
- 'first 'nice' girl he had ever known'
 - In C4, we see that Gatsby has known plenty of women, but Daisy was the first one from a higher class
 - Here, 'nice' inverted commas significant, implies respectability, there is a connection with Gatsby's dreams of success made
 - 'indiscernable barbed wire' shown, in the notion that 'nice' girls are not available to him
 - This is an example of how it is difficult to break into other social classes (theme of social class)
 - There is, however, a degree of social mobility in the novel
 - Yet Gatsby never reaches the highest social class available, we see barriers to entry at the very top of society
 - 'he found her excitingly desirable'
 - Interesting, as from the very beginning part of this is due to her background
 - Fitzgerald implies that she represents something to him
 - We are not told much about her personality, but her social background
 - Shows what he was fixated with at that point in time
 - Daisy takes her riches for granted
 - 'it was as casual a thing to her as his tent out at camp was to him'
 - This is exciting for him as all he knows is the tough life

- There is a mystery about Daisy to Gatsby, not about the girl herself, but about her background
 - Poetic language in the paragraph
 - Shows the incoherent thoughts he has, of wonder, excitement, etc.
 - Reflects the romantic readiness of Gatsby, what Daisy represents to him, we are brought back to his dreams in C6
- ‘colossal accident’
 - Implies much about Gatsby
 - Gatsby is a sort of conman, tricking his way into Camp Taylor’s Officer Training School
 - He moves from social circle to social circle in his journey from rags to riches, faking his way there as he faked his way onto Dan Cody’s yacht
 - There is also an element of social class and the division that results from it as Gatsby, a man ‘who did extraordinarily well in the war’ was never meant to be there
- ‘without a past’
 - Gatsby discards his past and reinvents himself, as seen in C6
 - Note that this isn’t a single trajectory from rags to riches
 - He is still penniless on 5 years on from Dan Cody and losing his inheritance
 - Gatsby may wear an officer cadet’s uniform, but ‘slips from his shoulders’ hints at the truth
- ‘took what he could get, ravenously and unscrupulously’
 - Gatsby’s ruthlessness is seen here, in a similar vein to his imprisonment of Walter Chase as alleged by Tom in C7
 - He takes Daisy, most likely after lying to her, on ‘false pretences’
 - Implication of revenge of lower classes on upper classes, Gatsby does the one thing he can do
 - Hence, in C7 when Tom reveals Gatsby’s gangster connections, Daisy is shocked because this is new to her, she thought she was an upper class young man
- ‘intended, probably, to take what he could and go’
 - Nick here shows immense insight, that Gatsby would have taken what he could have gotten and left her, but now after seducing her, he then ties himself to her
 - ‘committed himself to the following of a grail’ backs up theories in C6
 - Gatsby takes her, then feels devastated himself, as she now represents something special to him, he is now tied to her
 - As the Knights of the Round Table pursued the Holy Grail, so Gatsby pursues Daisy, the object of his hopes, dreams and desires
 - ‘married’ here recalls ‘wed’ in C6
- ‘gleaming like silver, safe and proud above the hot struggles of the poor’
 - Gatsby ties Daisy to riches and his dreams of wealth, he loves her now in contrast to his initial intentions
 - Gatsby idolizes both wealth and Daisy, the two are intertwined in Gatsby’s mind.
 - Nick suggests that by making Daisy the focus of his life, Gatsby surrenders his extraordinary power of visionary hope to the simple task of amassing wealth.

- Gatsby's dream is reduced to a motivation for material gain because the object of his dream is unworthy of his power of dreaming, the quality that makes him "great" in the first place. - Sparknotes
- 'I can't describe to you how surprised I was to find out I loved her, old sport'
 - Gatsby is surprised that he fell in love with her
 - But he falls in love with her due to what she represents
 - She, on the other hand, falls in love with this different young man who knows all sorts of different things
 - Ironical as Gatsby, the man who pretends to be like the other rich, sheltered men, is the one she loves due to this
- After, Gatsby is posted away by the government
 - Fitzgerald gives us an idea of how it was for young men in WWI
 - Their last interaction here before they are separated for five years before the novel begins shows the depth of love between them, regardless of initial motivations
 - Fitzgerald ties this to autumn, this is symbolic
 - Of the coming winter before the summer of the events of the novel
 - 'month of love', however implies that their relationship then only lasted for one month of idyllic romance
 - However, this is this the month Gatsby wants to recreate, and the month that causes Daisy to be so hesitant to marry Tom
- 'He did extraordinarily well in the war'
 - Gatsby is implied to be an excellent soldier, this ties in with his success as a criminal
 - Captain before he went to the front, Major after the Argonne battles in command of the divisional machine guns
 - This is significant, as 1st Infantry Division, or the Big Red One, was an important division in the Allied Offensive
 - The division advanced seven kilometers and defeated, in whole or part, eight German divisions in the Argonne battles
 - He needs some level of ruthlessness for both, and he possesses this
 - 'Argonne battles' were a period of very brutal fighting
 - His success in them is a mark of heroism and ruthlessness
 - Fitzgerald thus takes advantage of his 1920s readers' knowledge of this
 - Also in how he comes back as a penniless young war hero ('he was penniless now', Fitzgerald thus provides more social commentary through this
 - It is implied that this is why he becomes a criminal
 - Fitzgerald thus hints at Gatsby's motivations through little pieces of information throughout the novel
- 'tried frantically to get home'
 - There is an implication of it being too late already
 - Interesting in how Gatsby goes to Oxford and uses this as a point of pride, but he never wanted to be there in the first place
 - And leaves it after five months there after receiving that fateful letter from Daisy
- 'She didn't see why he couldn't come'
 - Daisy still wants him back, we know from C4 that Daisy may have wanted to pack her bags to see him or even elope with him
 - Daisy doesn't forget Gatsby, but it becomes too difficult to maintain the relationship

- 'She was feeling the pressure of the world outside', this engenders some sympathy as she feels the pressure from outside, and doesn't know if Gatsby can be relied on
 - She wants him back to confirm the relationship
- Daisy lives in a world of glamour, 'artificial world'
 - Of jazz parties and the like, but without the young man she loved, she feels depression/sadness as implied by the 'sadness and suggestiveness of life' and 'sad horns'
 - There are other young men around, and she moves with the social 'season'
 - She begins to move around again without Gatsby, see C4
 - Going back to what she did before out of uncertainty, this is typical of girls in WWI, understandable due to the war, uncertainty of his trustworthiness, family pressure, etc.
 - 'crying for a decision'
 - Wants some sort of finality, implying that she wants Gatsby back and that she wanted to marry her
 - However, he is unable to, and Tom comes along
 - 'some force—of love, of money, of unquestionable practicality—that was close at hand'
 - She wants some sense of direction, even as the practical social world around her influences her decision
 - She still loves Gatsby, but as the pressure mounts, the uncertainty looms, and the probability of him returning seems to grow smaller and smaller to the point where it begins to tend to zero, she seeks some force to satisfy this
 - Fitzgerald's detail allows us to understand the complex emotions involved, the difficulty of the decisions made
 - 'wholesome bulkiness'
 - This represents something definite
 - She doesn't marry him just for money, for the necklace, but a definite force that answers her doubts and uncertainties and family pressures
- 'letter reached Gatsby while he was at Oxford'
 - Presumably Daisy telling Gatsby that she's getting married
 - Fitzgerald conveys the desolation and devastation Gatsby feels through this simple statement by Nick
- Note that the events that transpire him are more than a simple sign of frivolity and moral degradation, but a series of complex situations and decisions made by complex people
- After, Gatsby still holds out hope, even after the events of the previous day
 - 'I don't think she ever loved him', 'You must remember, old sport, she was very excited this afternoon'
 - He then accepts reality to some extent, 'Of course she might have loved him just for a minute', 'and loved me more even then'
- Gatsby Post-War
 - 'He came back from France when Tom and Daisy were still on their wedding trip, and made a miserable but irresistible journey to Louisville on the last of his army pay'
 - 'He left feeling that if he had searched harder, he might have found her'
 - 'he was penniless now'

- 'he knew he had lost that part of it, the freshest and the best, forever'
 - Gatsby is still madly in love with Daisy, while she had moved on with Tom, and goes back to Louisville in vain
 - Last of his pay spend on this, he is penniless then, and presumably spends some time wandering the streets before Meyer Wolfsheim picks him up from the streets
 - 'A young major just out of the army and covered over with medals he got in the war. He was so hard up he had to keep on wearing his uniform because he couldn't buy some regular clothes. First time I saw him was when he come into Winebrenner's poolroom at Forty-third Street and asked for a job. He hadn't eat anything for a couple of days. 'Come on have some lunch with me,' I sid. He ate more than four dollars' worth of food in half an hour.' – Wolfsheim in C9
- And as such, Gatsby descends into criminal pursuits
 - Just as the American dream—the pursuit of happiness—has degenerated into a quest for mere wealth, Gatsby's powerful dream of happiness with Daisy has become the motivation for lavish excesses and criminal activities.
- After conversation and the events of the previous night, Nick's opinion of Gatsby changes
 - 'You're worth the whole damn bunch put together'
 - Note that this is most likely an impulsive statement from Nick, not his final judgement on Gatsby, as Nick states that he 'disapproved of him from beginning to end'
 - This is likely one side of his feelings towards Gatsby, it is likely that Nick has other conflicting feelings towards him, and this side of the argument took precedence after Gatsby told Nick of his real story

TIMELINE OF JAY GATSBY						
1907	1912	1917 Autumn	War	Armistice	~1919	1922
Meets Dan Cody, spends 5 years as his assistant	Dan Cody dies, loses inheritance, we do not know what happens in between this and 1917	Meets Daisy at Louisville, falls in love with her but has to go to war with the First/Third Infantry Division	Becomes a captain before he reaches the front, a major after the Argonne battles	Tries to return to Daisy, but gets sent to Oxford	Meets Meyer Wolfsheim	Story begins

Jordan and Nick

- Jordan calls Nick, he notices how her voice normally sounds 'fresh and cool', but sounds 'harsh and dry' here
 - Recall 'I'd had enough of all of them for one day and suddenly that included Jordan too' in C7
 - 'I don't know which of us hung up with a sharp click, but I know I didn't care'
 - This is telling, it is obvious that Nick hung up on her, and his inability to admit this to the reader implies that he was ashamed of his actions

- We'll see them talk about this again later in C9

Wilson's Deranged State

- Wilson mutters incoherently throughout the day, rocking 'himself back and forth on the couch inside'
 - Death of his wife clearly has a huge impact of him
- 'He announced that he had a way of finding out whom the yellow car belonged to'
 - 'Then he killed her', assumes that the man Myrtle had an affair with killed her
- 'God sees everything'
 - Wilson makes the connection between the eyes of TJ Eckleburg and God
 - God's eyes presiding over the moral degradation present in the 1920s, with the faded paint symbolising the extent to which man has lost its connection with God
 - Uses this to scold his wife for her actions, the moral degradation
 - He also possibly derives his misguided belief that Myrtle's killer must have been her lover from his belief that God sees what she does, and this is retribution
 - George asserts that the eyes represent a moral standard, the upholding of which means that he must avenge Myrtle's death
- He then wanders around
 - Police suppose that he went from 'garage to garage thereabout, inquiring for a yellow car'
 - But we know that he knew that it was Gatsby's car, and that Tom had told him this in C9

Gatsby's Death

- He spends his afternoon waiting for a call, on an air mattress on the surface of a pool
 - 'I have an idea that Gatsby himself didn't believe it would come and perhaps he no longer cared. If that was true he must have felt that he had lost the old warm world, paid a high price for living too long with a single dream'
 - The reader gets a sense of desolation, of despair that Gatsby must have felt at the demise of his dream
 - Gatsby has made Daisy a symbol of everything he values, and made the green light on her dock a symbol of his destiny with her. Thinking about Gatsby's death, Nick suggests that all symbols are created by the mind—they do not possess any inherent meaning; rather, people invest them with meaning. Nick writes that Gatsby must have realized "what a grotesque thing a rose is." The rose has been a conventional symbol of beauty throughout centuries of poetry. Nick suggests that roses aren't inherently beautiful, and that people only view them that way because they choose to do so. Daisy is "grotesque" in the same way: Gatsby has invested her with beauty and meaning by making her the object of his dream. –

Sparknotes

- Hence, Gatsby must have felt a sense of despair at the dissolution of his dream, made even more poignant by the reader's knowledge that the dissolution of his relationship with Daisy means the death of his hopes and dreams
- As such, Nick imagines the final thoughts of Gatsby in a moment of incredible insight

- The tragic end of a man who dared to dream, who dared to impose his indomitable will on reality is thus seen here
- 'the holocaust was complete'
 - Very powerful phrase by Nick, possibly means that the persecution of a dreamer like Gatsby by the cruel, unfeeling world for simply daring to transcend the barriers to entry to a higher social class has been completed with his death
 - In this world, dreams are exposed as mere illusions, and Gatsby's pursuit of them is revealed to be in vain
- Thus, the death of a man who so valiantly pursued a dream of creating a radically different future for himself is seen
 - Hence, Gatsby's endeavours end with his death, and Fitzgerald's novel questions the idea of an America where one can succeed in all things if one can try hard enough through depicting the impossibility of his dreams and the failure of his endeavours

Chapter 9: Aftermath of Gatsby's Death

Aftermath and inquest, Gatsby's isolation, series of encounters with the people Gatsby knew, funeral, Nick reflects on and ties up loose ends, Nick reflects on the events of the novel

Aftermath>Isolation in Death>Slagle>Henry C. Gatz>Klipspringer>Wolfsheim>Henry C. Gatz 2
>Funeral>Reflections>Jordan>Tom>Conclusion

Aftermath and Inquest

- Nick describes the scene after Gatsby's death
 - At the inquest, Michaelis brings up 'Wilson's suspicions of his wife'
 - But Catherine (last seen in C2) lies that 'her sister had been into no mischief whatsoever'
 - The case thus remained 'in its simplest form'

Gatsby's Isolation in Death

- 'it grew upon me that I was responsible, because no one was interested – interested, I mean, with that intense personal interest to which everyone has some vague right at the end'
 - Gatsby thus dies not only in despair and desolation, but also in isolation, with few people by his side from the last moment he drew breath on the Earth
 - 'I wanted to get somebody for him. I wanted to go into the room where he lay and reassure him: 'I'll get somebody for you, Gatsby''
 - Nick tries to make sure Gatsby has people grieving for him at his death, yet we find that few actually do care about this
 - Daisy and Tom had 'gone away early that afternoon, and taken baggage with them'
 - They've left New York, and gone west perhaps
 - 'baggage' is a double entendre
 - Either they've packed up their belongings to migrate west
 - Or they've brought emotional 'baggage' with them
 - Meyer Wolfsheim doesn't answer the phone

Slagle

- Long distance call from Chicago, implied that this is what kept Nick from being able to reach Gatsby that day
 - Criminal connections further confirmed, gives the reader an insight as to what Gatsby was really doing
 - As Tom implied in C7 that he had got wind of something even more serious than bootlegging, and the bootlegging was something very minor

Henry C. Gatz

- We see Gatsby's real father, not the one he adopted as his own, here for the first time in the novel
 - From a town in Minnesota
 - 'bundled up in a long cheap ulster against the warm September day'
 - It is implied that Gatsby did little for his parents, quickly discarding them as unwanted baggage not part of his dream

- This is shown here, as the reader sees Gatz wearing cheap clothing
 - Yet this is not necessarily true, as Gatsby did 'come out to see me' two years ago, buying him a house
 - Perhaps Gatsby did help his parents after all, but was not as generous with them as he could have been
- This is even sadder once one sees Gatz's grief
 - 'helpless and dismayed', 'on the point of collapse'
 - Yet, we also see excitement in the man, at what his son had managed to achieve, 'his grief began to be mixed with an awed pride'
- 'If he'd of lived, he'd of been a great man', 'He'd of helped build up the country'
 - Gatz's false impression of his son is first seen here, as he thinks that his son could have contributed to building the nation, when in fact he did anything but that as a criminal
 - Gatz is under a false impression that his son was an upstanding man of society, and Nick doesn't have the heart to tell him otherwise
 - This tugs even more at the heartstrings of readers once one considers that Gatsby rarely saw his parents
 - Effectively disowning them, they do not share much in his vast wealth as they are not part of his dream
 - Interesting how Gatsby's 'Platonic conception of himself', his vision and will to impose this on reality, is so strong that he effectively disowns his parents in contrast to how it usually is, inverting the natural order of things
 - Yet another example of how Gatsby's will and vision allows him to achieve great things, transcending some of the barriers of social class, earning riches and success, getting the love of his life back for a time, but this ultimately fails
 - And the negative implications of Gatsby disowning his father echo the negative implications of his dreams and how he achieves them
 - Nick, in a sense, lies when he says that 'That's true'
 - Honest Nick is not so honest
 - It is implied that Nick does so to comfort Gatz, but this is still one of the many instances throughout the novel where one questions Nick's integrity and reliability

Klipspringer

- A true freeloader, he only calls about a pair of tennis shoes he left behind
 - Doesn't come for the funeral of the man who was so generous to him
 - Nick hangs up on him
- Sad scene in a sense, as Klipspringer represents the kind of people who took advantage of Gatsby's wealth and generosity without caring for the man himself
 - Also seen in the next episode, with a man who 'implied that he had got what he deserved', and who used to 'sneer most bitterly at Gatsby' while drinking his liquor
 - Materialism of the 1920s

- o These people are part of the reason Gatsby dies with so few people at his funeral, who flit to his house like moths to a light and promptly leave when it goes out without gratitude for his generosity

Wolfsheim

- At first, Stella, 'a lovely Jewess' claims Wolfsheim is in Chicago until Nick mentions Gatsby
 - o Very suspicious, but readers are used to this by now
- We are then treated to an account of Gatsby's life after the war
 - o Gatsby was 'so hard up he had to keep on wearing his uniform because he couldn't buy some regular clothes'
 - Fitzgerald offers social commentary on the American government's treatment of its soldiers after the war
 - See C8 for more details
 - o 'I raised him up of nothing, right out of the gutter'
 - Gatsby, on a stroke of luck (or others would say misfortune), chanced upon Wolfsheim one day
 - Allows him to earn his millions via criminal endeavours
 - It is implied that Gatsby did not achieve success through the traditional American ideal of hard work
 - Rather, this is an unscrupulous trickster who gets his riches through ruthlessness, incredible dishonesty, and bootlegging
 - o As well as a huge amount of luck
 - Fitzgerald thus subverts a common belief in American culture, as Gatsby is not the prototypical hard worker who achieves success via this
- Like Gatsby, he shows a surprising twist to his character
 - o Gatsby showcases nobility on the night of Myrtle's death
 - o Wolfsheim shows some measure of loyalty and friendship in how he states that he and Nick should 'learn to show our friendship for a man when he is alive and not after he is dead'

Henry C. Gatz 2

- Materialistic
 - o 'I went next door and found Mr. Gatz walking up and down excitedly in the hall. His pride in his son and in his son's possessions was continually increasing"
 - Mr. Gatz is very proud because he has based his pride on the wealth his son had managed to achieve
 - Yet, the means by which Gatsby managed to achieve this wealth are questionable
 - And this implies that Mr Gatz is materialistic, being proud of his son for the wealth he achieves and not his relationship with his parents or what he's done for others
- Understanding
 - o 'Of course we was broke up when he run off from home, but I see now there was a reason for it. He knew he had a big future in front of him'
 - Does not hold it against Gatsby for leaving home to achieve success
 - Yet, this also implies that Mr Gatz has a slightly wrong view of the man

- Gatsby does not only leave home to achieve success, he also does so as he does not accept the circumstances he was born with, not his status and not his parents
- Further compounded by his impression of Gatsby as a hard worker
 - Shows Nick the book of his resolutions at age 8, but since then Gatsby is implied to be rather lazy
 - At 17, he lazes by the lakeside, drops out of school
- Yet, he is proud of his son and what he had become

Funeral

- 'I took him aside and asked him to wait for half an hour. But it wasn't any use. Nobody came'
 - Only Owl-Eyed Man, Mr Gatz, Nick, a few servants and the postman are there
 - Gatsby dies in isolation here, it is particularly tragic that this is the aftermath of the dissolution of his dream

Reflections

- 'I see now that this has been a story of the West, after all – Tom and Gatsby, Daisy and Jordan and I, were all Westerners, and perhaps we possessed some deficiency in common which made us subtly unadaptable to Eastern life'
 - Nick thinks that America is divided into regions with contrasting values
 - The East, in a sense, lacks the moral centre of the Midwest, and this moral depravity dooms the Westerners that arrive here to failure
 - As the fast paced, different lifestyle shape their behaviour into something else from what they would normally be as they lose their moral compasses
 - See Nick in C2
 - Also significant how the West is normally seen as a land of promise and prosperity
 - Where American ideals reign and where the feudal aristocracies of Europe are left behind
 - Yet, Tom and Daisy are part of a rigid upper class that excludes the new rich from it as if there was 'indiscernible barbed wire' between them
 - Gatsby dares to dream of a future beyond what would be expected of him, but this is not achieved via hard work, and in fact ends in failure
 - He is a criminal, is unable to enter the ranks of the old rich, and he puts on a façade of Jay Gatsby to achieve his dreams
 - Fitzgerald thus questions the American ideal of how one can achieve almost anything true sheer hard work
- 'After Gatsby's death the East was haunted for me like that', 'I decided to come back home'

Jordan

- 'But I wanted to leave things in order and not just trust that obliging and indifferent sea to sweep my refuse away'
 - Does not want to be like the Buchanans, take responsibility for his actions and does not leave it to others to clean up
 - Hence, he sees Jordan one last time before he leaves to truly end their relationship
- She suddenly claims that she was engaged to another man without commenting on what Nick has told her to clear the air between them
 - We should note that Jordan is a fundamentally dishonest person, and Nick himself doubts this assertion

- A possible implication could be that she doesn't want to seem as if she was hurt by this to Nick
- 'You threw me over on the telephone'
 - Nick hung up on Jordan, see C8
- Driving
 - Jordan calls Nick a 'bad driver', says that she thought he was 'an honest, straightforward person'
 - The reader thus gets the impression that Nick is anything but
 - That he has not considered the consequences of his actions and how they affect others around him
 - Hence, while he tries to clean up his messes, he does not truly succeed in doing so, and in fact hurts Jordan when he tries to wash his hands of the entire debacle after C7
 - Nick seems to admit this when he states that "I'm thirty," I said. 'I'm five years too old to lie to myself and call it honour'"
 - Nick now admits his failure to be a non-judgemental person
 - In contrast to his assertion in C1
 - Perhaps, Nick realizes that to be judgmental is inevitable
 - As he makes a judgement later on as well, in how he states that Tom and Daisy are 'careless people'
 - This may be an example of spiritual and emotional growth, as he may recognise that it is human to pass judgement on others
- 'Angry, and half in love with her, and tremendously sorry, I turned away'
 - He still perhaps loves Jordan to a certain extent, but the events of the novel have shaped his perceptions to an extent that he cannot bear to be with her
 - Note how Nick is unable to commit, one can draw a contrast with Gatsby's all out romantic approach, his romantic readiness

Tom Buchanan

- Meets him 'One afternoon late in October'
 - Tom reveals that he had told a murderous Wilson that it was Gatsby's car
 - And that he believed that Gatsby was a despicable man who deserved what was coming to him
 - He is unaware that Daisy was the one driving
 - Nick is unable to tell Tom that 'it wasn't true', calls it an 'unutterable fact', perhaps he cannot bear to break up their marriage
 - He knows that this will ruin their marriage, and as such he does not tear the Buchanans apart
 - In a sense, he displays honour and decency in how he does not tell the truth
 - And later shakes his hand as he understands that Tom thought that what he had done was the right thing to do
 - Tom was, after all, also hurt by the death of Myrtle, and he did in fact suffer loss in the novel as well
 - 'I sat down and cried like a baby'
- Yet, Nick makes a judgement, calling them

- 'careless people, Tom and Daisy—they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made'
 - Tom gets Wilson killed, abuses his wife while having an affair with her
 - Daisy never admits to the crime she committed, and hides behind Tom when problems arise
- They thus run away from difficulties, as they have the money to do so while maybe even having little sense of obligation to others
 - Selfish actions by indulgent, irresponsible people with no regard for consequences are seen throughout the novel, and Nick comments on this
 - Perhaps they are able to do so and get away with it due to their money, and consequences mean nothing to them, Nick suggests
- This means something to Nick, with his 'provincial squeamishness'
 - His Midwestern values make him unable to not care, yet perhaps New York rubs off on him as suggested in C2, as he does end up hurting Jordan

Conclusion

- Nick returns to Gatsby's house one last time
 - 'On the last night, with my trunk packed and my car sold to the grocer, I went over and looked at that huge incoherent failure of a house once more'
 - Perhaps the house is symbolic of Gatsby's dreams
 - His incoherent dreams end up in incoherent failure, as Gatsby's motivations and methods were ultimately misguided
 - Fitzgerald uses this symbolism to effectively imply the tragedy of the man's life, of previously unbridled potential marred and limited by his love for Daisy and what she represents to him
 - 'his mind would never romp again like the mind of God'
- Nick reflects on Gatsby's dreams
 - 'I thought of Gatsby's wonder when he first picked out the green light at the end of Daisy's dock. He had come a long way to this blue lawn and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him'
 - Symbolism of green light and Gatsby's dream
 - He was unable to accept that the past was the past, and this ultimately results in his doom
 - 'Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us'
 - 'So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past'
 - This concludes the last few pages of the novel, a sort of eulogy by Nick
 - Nick mourns and recounts, recounts and mourns, and as such we get a sense of the recursive nature of grief by Fitzgerald
 - Nick returns to the motif of time, of the significance of the memories of the past to the green light, the dreams of the future
 - Gatsby tries to recreate the past in the future, but he is unable to move beyond it, as the current draws him backwards as he tries to row towards it

- He never really escapes the past of his, as his past as a poor 'clam digger and a salmon fisher', as a violent soldier, and his past as a ruthless criminal all end up dooming his romance with Daisy
 - As she was unaware of, and frightened by it
- He never really loses his optimism ('tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms further'), always holding out hope that Daisy would come to him except perhaps in his final moments
 - And even that is conjecture
 - Yet, he expends his energy, his dreams, his hopes in pursuit of a 'green light, an orgasmic future, that year by year recedes before us', a goal that forever moves further away
- Hence, Gatsby's struggle, and hence the American Dream, is commented on by Nick, as the characters and people struggle in search of a goal that forever moves further away
 - And we see a melancholy in Nick as he ends this tale of a man who was great because of his willingness and courage to dream, and fight his way towards it, defying social norms and the ever receding future that comes from his inability to repeat the past or escape his unwanted damaging truths that come from his past